

A Plan to provide and manage opportunities  
for Sustainable Recreation in the National Park

# Enjoying the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

**Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and partners**  
Funded by CCW and Visit Wales



**Parc Cenedlaethol  
Arfordir Penfro  
Pembrokeshire Coast  
National Park**

# Pembrokeshire Coast National Park



The Smalls

Ynys Gwales  
Grassholm Island

Ynys Sgomer  
Skomer Island

Sgogwm  
Skokholm

Bae Caerfyrddin  
Carmarthen Bay

Ynys Bŷr  
Caldey Island

Parth y WA  
Maes Castellmartin  
Castellmartin Range  
MOD Zone

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## Executive Summary

The ability to take part in recreational activities and enjoy the outdoors brings benefits to all levels of society – the individual, the family, the community, the county, and the country as a whole.

Worldwide research has shown that recreational enjoyment is essential to human health, key to human development, essential to the quality of life, reduces anti-social behaviour, builds families and communities, reduces the cost of health care, social services and policing, is a significant economic generator and is essential to ecological survival.

Pembrokeshire has some of the finest opportunities for outdoor recreation in Europe, based around its outstanding marine and coastal environment. The Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey recognises that the county already has one of the highest participation levels in outdoor activities in Wales. Enjoying the scenery and wildlife was ranked highly in reasons for visiting the outdoors demonstrating that outdoor recreation and the natural beauty of the National Park is greatly valued by local residents.

The environment of Pembrokeshire is evidently important to both local people and tourists and remains one of its strongest features for attracting visitors; the most popular main activity for visitors is to see a natural attraction e.g. coastline, countryside, island or nature reserve etc.

This Plan uses the special qualities of the National Park to place the environment at the heart of recreation management, and show that conservation and public enjoyment, the two statutory purposes of National Parks in the UK are not only compatible but can be complementary. Recreation has the ability to connect people to the environment and it is this goal of long-term sustainable recreation, achieved by raising environmental awareness and responsibility, which this Plan aims to realise.

The Plan sets out a vision and principles to guide the development of outdoor recreation within and around the National Park. The Plan takes a pro-active approach to encouraging recreation in suitable locations, based around the special qualities of the area and the capacity of a particular place to accommodate any given mix of recreational activities.

The National Park Authority (NPA) believes that a flexible and forward-looking Plan, based around making sustainable use of the National Park's special qualities,

can encourage more local people and visitors to enjoy Pembrokeshire responsibly. With planning, more can be done to contribute to the national drives to increase physical activity and encourage more people who do not usually use the National Park to recognise the opportunity.

While most recreation takes place informally and without adverse impact, there is potential for recreation to compromise the area's special qualities, and for recreational users themselves to come into conflict. These are the areas where this Plan is focussed.

The context of the Plan, why it is needed, links to the Local Development Plan (LDP), Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Management Plan (NPMP) and other relevant policies and strategies are covered in section 1 along with the powers and tools available to assist with recreation management. The LDP, NPMP, codes of conduct and the ability to promote, educate and improve access are the main powers available to the NPA in the management of recreation. Satisfaction with the provision of recreation in Pembrokeshire is currently high and we aim to keep it that way.

Section 2 provides an overview of current recreation with the evidence base for distribution and intensity provided by the Wales Activity Mapping project. The project provides us with important data that allows us to monitor change in recreational use over time along with any management issues that may occur. It is also important baseline data that can be used to measure relevant actions from policies and plans. We have covered some of the issues, challenges and opportunities associated with recreation provision and management including capacity, user conflicts, climate change and future demand.

The vision, strategy and objectives which have been agreed by our partners are described in section 3. A spatial approach incorporating Recreation Character Areas describing how demand, recreational type and the National Park special qualities are considered when planning recreation is shown in section 4 where our aim is to encourage specific activities in the most appropriate locations.

Our approach to awareness, promotion, access and infrastructure is covered in section 5. By managing the landscape that people come to enjoy and the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, inland rights of way, beaches and car parks that the majority of visitors use, the NPA and its partners manage and protect many of the most important tourism 'facilities' in Pembrokeshire.

Each heading area has examples of how the NPMP and LDP influence this Plan whilst there is a separate Action Plan explaining how we will implement the relevant visions and objectives. We have also discussed monitoring, evaluation and the triggers that could begin a review of the Plan within the recommended 5 year period.

The National Park has a huge number of conservation designations including 13 Special Areas of Conservation, 5 Special Protection Areas, 60 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 7 National Nature Reserves and Wales' only Marine Nature Reserve. About 80% of the length of the National Park coastline is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The National Park area contains 279 Scheduled Ancient Monuments while there are almost 6000 sites in the National Park area listed on the Historic Environment Record. The National Park has a greater variety of geological and landform scenery than any area of the same size in the British Isles.

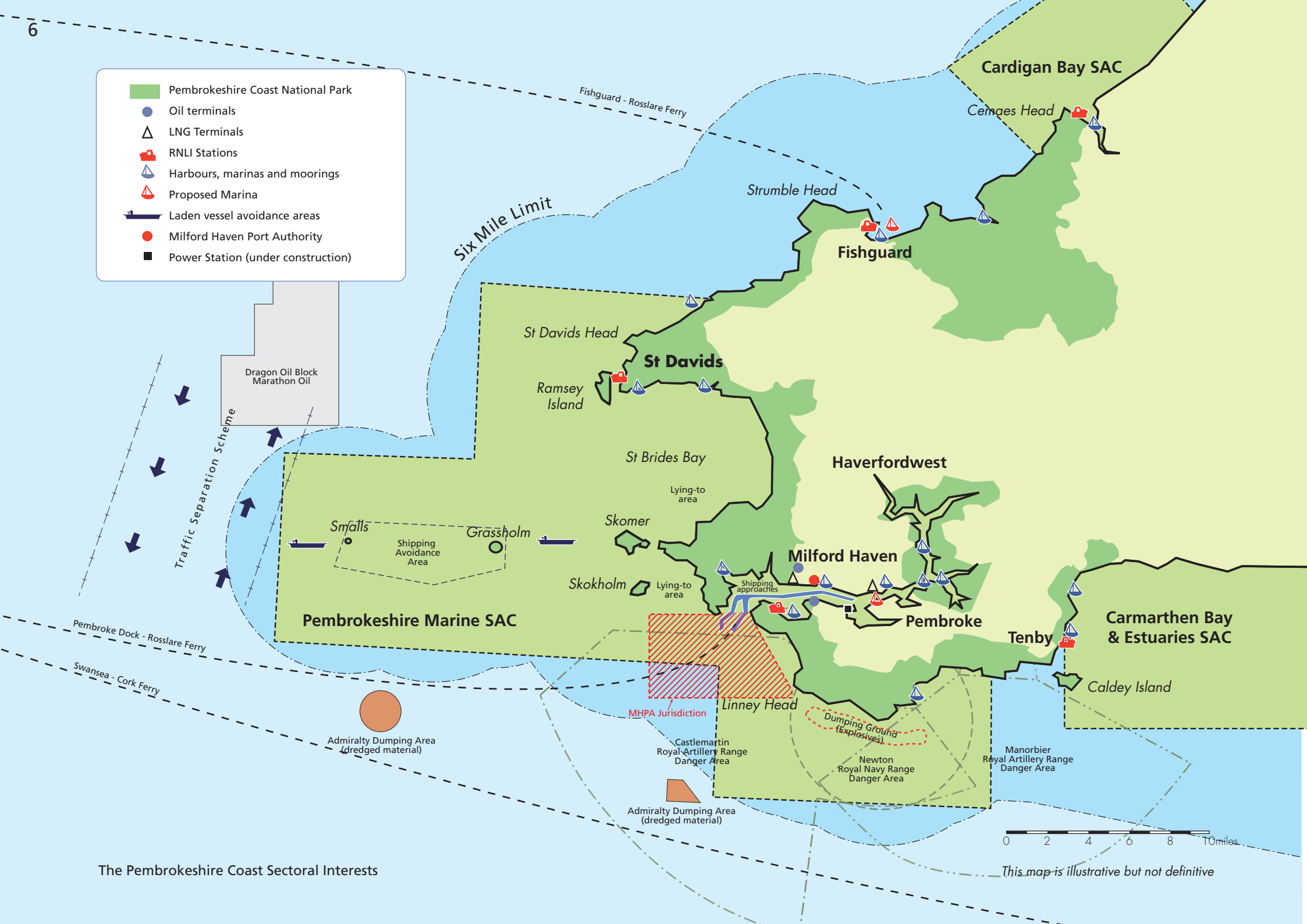
The national and international value of the landscape in the National Park will be at the heart of our decision making process as we seek to manage recreation in a sustainable manner allowing future generations to enjoy the special qualities that attract visitors and make Pembrokeshire a unique place to live and play.

## Our vision –

*We work in partnership to make Pembrokeshire a leading year round opportunity for outdoor recreation balancing protection of the special qualities of the area, respect for site capacity and promotion of environmental sustainability, with enjoyment, ease of access for everyone, a prosperous local economy and healthy and active residents. Ultimately, we simply want people to continue enjoying the National Park in a sustainable way.*



- Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
- Oil terminals
- LNG Terminals
- RNLI Stations
- Harbours, marinas and moorings
- Proposed Marina
- Laden vessel avoidance areas
- Milford Haven Port Authority
- Power Station (under construction)



The Pembrokeshire Coast Sectoral Interests

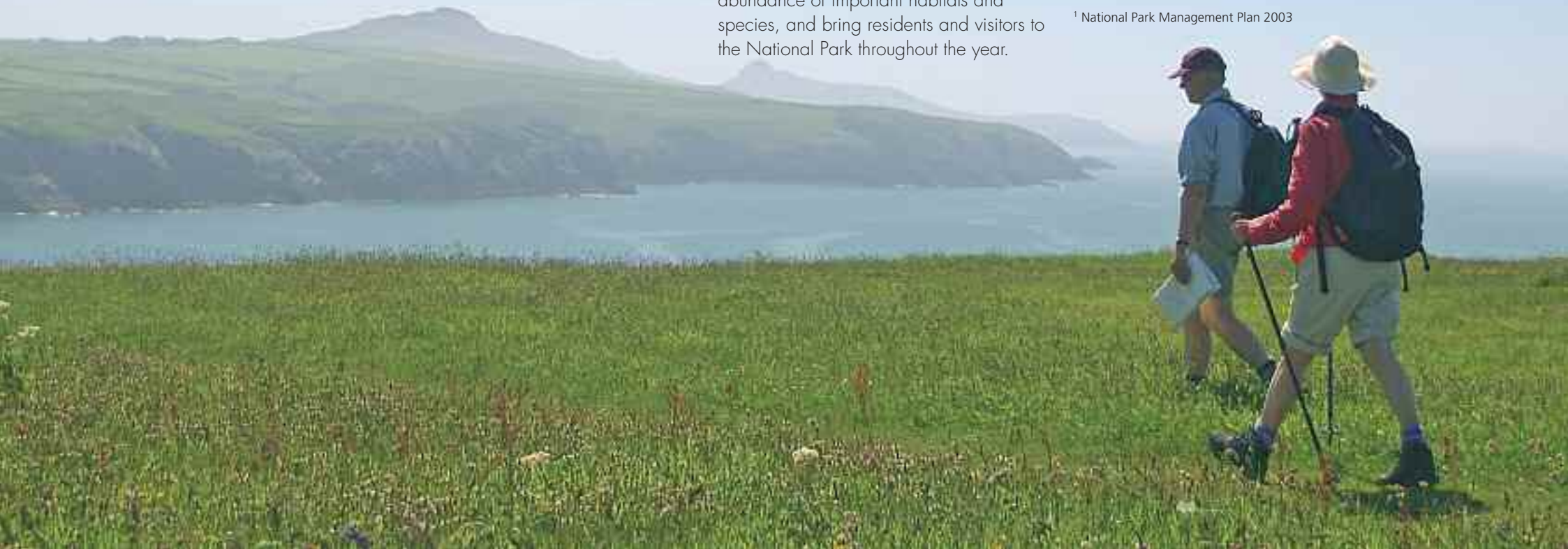
This map is illustrative but not definitive

# 1 Introduction

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (PCNP) was designated in 1952, following the introduction of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, in order to safeguard its special qualities, which have been identified as:<sup>1</sup>

- **Visual character:** The unspoilt and spectacular scenery of Pembrokeshire is the main draw for residents and visitors alike, who are attracted by the coastal splendour and uninterrupted landscapes and seascapes.
- **Remoteness and tranquillity:** Despite the high density of population and farmed landscape compared to other National Parks, Pembrokeshire retains a sense and image of un-managed beauty, with space to breathe and enjoy the natural processes of land and sea.
- **Biodiversity:** From rocky reefs to the Bosherton lily ponds, the Pembrokeshire coast and its islands are internationally recognised for their rich and diverse abundance of important habitats and species, and bring residents and visitors to the National Park throughout the year.
- **Geological diversity:** A wide range of geomorphological processes, working on complex geology has shaped the coastline all around Pembrokeshire, creating the headlands and bays, rolling hills, plateaus and flooded river valleys, which have provided deep water access as havens for navigation and, in Milford Haven, for industrial development.
- **Archaeological and historic built resource:** The distinctive human settlement history across Pembrokeshire has created a rich set of historical and contemporary sites and buildings, many of which reflect the past functions and industries of the area and provide the basis of the cultural heritage of the county.

<sup>1</sup> National Park Management Plan 2003





*Surfing at Whitesands*



*Windsurfing on the Haven*



*Kayaking in Ramsey Sound*

### 1.1 Why is this Plan needed?

Pembrokeshire contains some of the best opportunities for outdoor recreation in Europe, based on access to the special qualities mentioned. The majority of recreation in the National Park is done through sightseeing, visiting sites and properties (Especially those of the National Trust and the NPA). The rights of way network is a key recreational resource for walking, horse riding and cycling but its management is dealt with in the 2007 Rights of Way Improvement Plan produced jointly with the Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) and overseen by the Local Access Forum.

While most recreation takes place informally and without adverse impact, there is clear potential for recreation to compromise the area's special qualities, and for recreational users themselves to come into conflict. These are the areas where this Plan is focussed.

There is general consensus among those organisations involved in the provision of facilities or management services that we need a Plan for the following reasons:

1. To minimise any adverse effects of recreation on the natural environment and special qualities.

2. To make the most of healthy and sustainable recreation opportunities for the local community and visitors.
3. To make the most of limited resources, ensuring they are not focused on disproportionate, localised and short term issues and ensure that vital facilities are not lost or degraded.
4. To identify desirable levels of activities for certain locations.
5. To guide the provision of facilities and information which influence activities and the location of those activities.
6. To provide opportunities for all those using the area for recreation to become more involved in managing activities themselves, thereby taking greater ownership of the National Park.
7. To identify issues likely to affect the National Park's recreational capacity and demand in future, such as the impacts of climate change and changes in social and demographic trends.
8. To maximise sustainable benefits to the economy and support initiatives encouraging training and awareness of the recreation industry to the local community.

This Plan sets out a vision and principles to guide the development of outdoor recreation within and around the National Park. The Plan

*In the 'Valuing our Environment 2006' report recreation was identified as providing approximately a quarter of the total income in the Park. Recreation also accounts for almost half of the area's economic output.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>2</sup> Valuing our Environment - Economic Impact of the National Parks of Wales 2006

takes a pro-active approach to encouraging recreation in suitable locations, based around the special qualities of the area and the capacity of a particular place to accommodate any given mix of recreational activities.

The NPA believes that a flexible and forward-looking Plan, based around making sustainable use of the National Park's special qualities, can encourage more communities and visitors to enjoy Pembrokeshire responsibly. With planning, more can be done to contribute to the national drives to increase physical health and encourage more people who do not usually use the National Park to recognise the opportunity.



The Plan will only be successful if all those involved in recreation in Pembrokeshire can work together in partnership. Public agencies especially, need to deliver coordinated opportunities for public enjoyment, avoiding overlapping work and conflicts and recognise others' priorities and interests. Individuals and clubs need to cherish their opportunities and recognise where they may need to adjust for the longer-term benefit. This Plan aims to provide a framework to achieve this and a context of place and sustainability to guide action plans such as the Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy and Creating an Active Wales Plan.

## 1.2 The layout of the Plan

The context of this Plan, why it is needed, the requirements, National Park purposes and special qualities are all explained in Section 1. Principles taken from the LDP, NPMP and other relevant policies and strategies are included along with the powers and tools available to assist with recreation management.

Section 2 provides an overview of current recreation with further detailed information in appendix B. Some of the issues, challenges and opportunities associated with recreation provision and management including capacity, user conflicts, climate change and future

demand are also described. Where there are issues of particular concern or good practice they are highlighted in text boxes.

The vision, strategy and objectives are covered in section 3. Section 4 shows our spatial approach incorporating Recreation Character Areas (RCA) describing how demand, recreational type and the National Park special qualities are considered when planning recreation.

Section 5 details our approach to awareness, promotion, access and infrastructure. Each heading area has examples of how the NPMP and LDP influence this Plan.

Monitoring and evaluation is covered in section 6 as are the triggers that could begin a review of the plan within the recommended 5 year plan period.

## 1.3 What is the context of this Plan?

### 1.3.1 National Park Purposes

The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act outlined two purposes for National Parks, to conserve their natural beauty and promote their enjoyment by the public. More recently, the Environment Act 1995 redefined the role of National Parks across the UK



Castell Henllys Iron Age Fort

and placed the following equal statutory purposes on National Park Authorities:

- **To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park, and**
- **To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities**

National Parks also have a duty to foster the social and economic well being of local communities in carrying out these purposes. Where there is irreconcilable conflict between the two purposes, the Sandford Principle as defined in the Environment Act gives priority to the conservation purpose.

### What is sustainable recreation?

When we use the words 'sustainable recreation' in the context of this plan, what do we mean? We are talking about outdoor activity in the coast and countryside which makes the most of the intrinsic attractions of the natural and cultural environment and is carried out to minimise impacts on the special character of the place and on the enjoyment of other users and residents. Ideally the activity contributes to the enjoyment and health of the participants and to the economy of the host area.

There are several components to this issue for every type of recreation;

1. The nature of the activity and how it is carried out
2. The location and timing of the activity
3. The scale and frequency of the activity.

We will promote activities which by their nature and levels are appropriate and viable in the proposed location.



*Peregrine Falcons nest on Pembrokeshire's cliffs*



*Pembrokeshire - amazing below as well as above*

The National Park is also a IUCN Category V Protected Landscape where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value. Safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values.

The Environment Act (S62)<sup>3</sup> places on other statutory bodies and public undertakers a duty to have regard to the purposes of National Parks.

### 1.3.2 National Park special qualities

Each area within the National Park has a different mix of special qualities, and the type and level of recreation that is suitable varies accordingly.

Public sector support for recreation should be based on and respect the qualities most important to particular areas. This idea is explored in section 4 and Appendix A.

### 1.4 Requirements of a Recreation Plan

The Plan will form the basis of supplementary planning guidance to provide more detailed advice on the way in which relevant policies of the LDP will be applied. Sections 4 and 5

show examples of how this Plan is linked to policy set out in the LDP and the NPMP. The Plan also considers an extensive list of national, regional and local plans, policies and strategies which can be viewed in Appendix C. Based on these, the following principles are evident:

- **Recreational activities must be sustainable, especially within the National Park environment and designated conservation areas.** This needs to cover both impact on landscapes, habitats and species and increasingly, environmental sustainability in terms of pollution and resource use. In the future planning of recreation we will endeavour to consider the ecosystem services provided by the environment.
- **Recreation will be inclusive and accessible to local people and visitors** and cater for a wide variety of different interests, abilities and backgrounds.
- Recreation will ideally promote health and well-being and for local people should be available close to their homes.
- **Activity promotion will aim to extend the season rather than increase numbers at peak times,** encouraging a high-quality experience supported by a skilled workforce.

- Recreation and associated facilities should reflect local distinctiveness, fit into the landscape and provide opportunities to learn about the special qualities of the National Park.
- Recreation may provide opportunities to encourage people to act more sustainably.
- **Recreation should, where possible, promote community development and avoid negative impacts on residents, including land managers and other users.**
- Local communities/users should have the opportunity to participate in developing policies and projects.

### 1.5 What areas does the Plan cover?

Much recreation in Pembrokeshire, and the associated pressures and impacts, are focused in the narrow coastal zone, largely corresponding to the National Park.

Although the National Park's designation stops at Mean Low Water (exception in the Daugleddau), **this Plan also reaches out to the inshore waters and islands to integrate management and planning across the coast.** This is necessary because of the coastal nature of the National Park's special qualities and because access to

<sup>3</sup> Environment Act 1995 section 62 and 63 National Parks

inshore waters is almost invariably through the National Park.

This Plan focuses on two aspects of recreation. Where a new or changing activity needs development or planning consent the Plan relates to privately owned and public land in the National Park. Where the management of an activity is concerned it deals with land and water in the 'public realm' i.e. those areas of land where the public act as though there is a right of recreational access regardless of ownership. This covers; publicly accessible land, cliffs, beaches, Open Country as defined in the CROW Act, National Trust Land and public rights of way within or immediately surrounding the National Park and offshore islands.

The National Park and in particular the coastline has a huge number of conservation designations which are listed in the Executive Summary. The inshore waters surrounding the National Park fall under a different management regime to either public access land or private land on the coast and most are European Marine Sites.

**We will need to consider these designations and, accommodate their conservation objectives when planning for recreation and work together with the relevant bodies to achieve the recreational objectives within this Plan.**

### **1.6 Powers/Tools available**

**The NPA and other public bodies in Pembrokeshire have the ability to encourage recreation by increasing opportunities, promoting their product and improving access facilities.** We also have the opportunity to increase the capacity of an area or activity by agreed management measures (e.g. working with the Ministry of Defence to allow access to the Castlemartin range for fishing, climbing, surfing and in 2010 a new access path). The LDP, NPMP, Sandford Principle, codes of conduct and the ability to promote and improve access are the main tools available to the NPA in the management of recreation. **If any restriction of recreation is proposed we will consult with those involved and will strive to provide logical reasons for our actions promoting understanding and encouraging agreement.**

Satisfaction with the provision of recreation in Pembrokeshire is currently high, as judged by the visitors' surveys carried out in 2004 and 2007. We want to make sure that this remains the case. The NPA strongly believes in the importance of focussing on promotion, awareness, education and creating a feeling of ownership in the National Park when managing recreation. This is a much more positive and realistic approach

than can be achieved through regulation and control but it requires time, effort, relationship building and communication to make it work.

The partnership approach to recreation management currently used in the county e.g. Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter Group is often viewed as ground breaking and as an example of best practice. Agreed Climbing Restrictions in Pembrokeshire are also good examples of working in partnership and highlight the importance of this method in achieving sustainable recreation.

The implementation of the Marine and Coastal Access Act may provide powers to restrict certain recreational activities in proposed Marine Conservation Zones in particular within Highly Protected Marine Conservation Zones although detailed proposals are not yet known.



*World class cliff climbing in South Pembrokeshire*

## 1.7 Active management

Most recreational activity takes place with very little public involvement or control and should continue to do so. People enjoying recreation and operators providing recreation should generally have the freedom to develop and participate in activities.

The situations where public services have a role in recreation provision are;

- When there is a need to provide coordination of facilities or activities to protect publicly valued assets (public safety, clean beaches, nature conservation, archaeology etc.) or to promote use for community benefits such as health.

- Where the market cannot sustain activities, which may have significant health, understanding or education benefits. Or where public involvement has a significant benefit to the wider local economy.
- Where there is public funding of facilities or promotion or where public assets / land are involved.

Management of activities should only be needed where there is an actual or potential threat to the special qualities of a particular area, where there are significant problems to local communities because of recreation, where user-user or safety conflicts cannot be rectified or where there is an impact on publicly managed land and facilities.



### The National Trust

The National Trust is one of the nation's leading providers of great days out. We are passionate about the outdoors and nature and believe that enjoying the simple pleasures of life is time well spent. Looking after places of natural beauty and enabling people to experience and marvel at nature is central to our purpose.

Through our ownership, access provision, engagement opportunities and interpretation, and our dedicated countryside team, we provide unparalleled opportunities for enjoyment of coast and countryside within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

With 115 years' experience we are one of the nation's leading conservator and guardian of coast, countryside and special places. We own and care for one third of the Pembrokeshire coast, including many of its most iconic sites, including Stackpole, St David's Head, the Marloes Peninsula, the Abereiddi Blue Lagoon, Dinas Island, the Solva Coast and Lawrenny.

The National Park Authority and the National Trust work closely towards similar objectives but use different mechanisms. The Trust manages through land ownership, the Park Authority through the planning process, rights of way management and has a lower emphasis on ownership.



*The Wales Activity Mapping project - a foundation for the Plan*

## 2 Current Recreation Overview

### 2.1 The evidence base for recreation distribution

The evidence base for recreation distribution and intensity used in this Plan is the Wales Activity Mapping project, formerly known as the South West Wales Recreation Audit<sup>4</sup>. This web based GIS system aimed at recreation, tourism and conservation managers provides in-depth detailed location and activity information for South West Wales. The project provides us with important data that allows us to monitor change in recreational use over time along with any management issues that may occur. It is also important baseline data that can be used to measure relevant actions from policies and plans.

A more in-depth overview of recreational activity distribution can be found in Appendix B but for the purposes of the Plan a synopsis of general recreation in the county is provided in this section.

#### 2.1.2 South Pembrokeshire

The South of Pembrokeshire has a major concentration of visitor accommodation around Saundersfoot and Tenby. Visitor activities in the South-East focus on award winning beaches, walking and watersports. Wildlife boat trips are popular around the island of Caldey. Further West

along the South coast the levels of development and facilities are reduced and activities focus on walking, beaches, climbing, surfing and fishing.

The dominant factors in terms of inshore water use are the Sea Danger Areas at Castlemartin, Manorbier and Pendine. Milford Haven and the Daugleddau Estuary are popular with all forms of sailing, motor craft and canoeing.

#### 2.1.3 West Pembrokeshire

On the West coast around St Bride's Bay, the more exposed beaches are good for surfing, wind and kite-surfing with beach riding in large numbers focussing on a few locations. Around the St Davids peninsula and up to Strumble Head, active sports such as climbing and coastering are carried out, while the islands and small harbours are increasingly popular throughout holiday seasons with watersports and wildlife boat trips.

Walking, cycling and horse riding occur throughout the National Park with increasing proportions of visitors involved in using a greatly improved network of public rights of way. The Coast Path, one of only three National Trails in Wales, is the most heavily used path passing right around the county's coast. It attracts an estimated 915000 user days per year.<sup>5</sup>

#### 2.1.4 North Pembrokeshire

The North of the National Park tends to be less crowded and maintains stretches of coastline characterised by undisturbed and undeveloped beauty. There is an increase in the use of the wild North coast for wildlife sightseeing and outdoor activities, which has begun to introduce new elements into a relatively wild and undeveloped area. In the North the Preseli Hills and Gwaun Valley are a valued resource used by relatively low numbers of walkers, cyclists and horse-riders.

#### 2.1.5 Visitor Surveys

In the most recent visitor survey (Pembrokeshire Visitor Survey

2007/2008)<sup>6</sup> the vast majority of those interviewed come from the UK, with 12% being Pembrokeshire residents. There has been an increase from 34% to 43% of visitors coming from Wales between 2004 and 2007. Much of this recreation is seasonal, with around 60% of holidays occurring in the summer months, mirroring national trends. Visitors from the South East and London come almost exclusively in summer or winter, while other regions supply people on a more even basis. Residents take part in recreation on a much less seasonal basis, in particular for day trips, walking and cycling.



<sup>4</sup> <http://rawg.no-ip.org> is a partnership approach to sustainably managing recreation in South West Wales

<sup>5</sup> Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail User Survey. 1997

<sup>6</sup> Pembrokeshire Visitor Survey Final Report 2008

The summer peak of staying visitors is felt most around the St Davids Peninsula (due to limited capacity and variety of activities) and the South Coast (due to sheer numbers), but most recreation occurs harmoniously and requires little direct management at most locations (apart from key beaches), even in summer months. Several activities, such as climbing and outdoor activity providers, have agreed or signed up to codes of practice, in order to minimise environmental impact.

On average, Pembrokeshire remains a long-stay destination with 62% of visitors spending at least 5 nights in the county. However, this hides seasonal variations; two thirds of stays during the autumn are short breaks, for example. The ratio of day visitors to staying visitors in Pembrokeshire is also among the lowest in any National Park in the UK, with only 19% of visits being day trips.

The most popular main activity for visitors is to see a natural attraction e.g. coastline, countryside, island or nature reserve etc (table 1). This suggests that the natural beauty of Pembrokeshire remains one of its strongest features for attracting visitors.

### 2.1.6 Resident Demand

The Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey 2008<sup>7</sup> interviewed a representative selection of people in Wales to gain an insight into the recreational behaviour of the national population. For the Pembrokeshire Spatial Plan Area the number of respondents



that had carried out activities at least once in a 12 month period **was the highest in Wales for walking, outdoor swimming, running, road cycling, fishing, watersports, motorised watersports and joint highest with North West Wales for climbing and central Wales for horse riding.** For people visiting the outdoors once a day Pembrokeshire also scored higher than any other Spatial Plan area in Wales.

**Enjoying the scenery and wildlife was ranked highly in reasons for visiting the outdoors. This demonstrates that outdoor recreation and the natural beauty and wildlife of the National Park is valued very highly among local residents in Pembrokeshire and is an important part of their everyday life.**

## 2.2 Issues - Challenges - Opportunities

This section highlights some of the issues, challenges and opportunities that impact and may impact upon the recreational user and the special qualities of the National Park. A selection of activity and Recreation Character Area specific case studies have been included throughout sections 2 to 5 and can be found in the green text boxes.

### 2.2.1 Capacity and Congestion

Many smaller coastal locations can get extremely congested at peak times, with visitor traffic including caravans and boat trailers arriving along small roads and launching from a limited number of sites. This is exacerbated where locations are used for several activities, where access is limited to single-track roads and where



parking is limited. The recreational hot spot sites around St Davids Peninsula (such as Abereiddy Porthgain, St Justinians and Solva) and around the Dale Peninsula (such as Martin's Haven, St Bride's Haven and Dale) can become congested at peak times.

The Tenby and Saundersfoot areas have the largest volume of users in the county, which also creates traffic congestion between the urban centres

<sup>7</sup> Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey 2008 CCW&FC

### Management concerns in the Beach Coast RCA

**Freshwater West** is one of the largest and wildest beaches in Pembrokeshire, and offers a sense of escape and freedom for an increasing number of people. It is Wales's premier surfing beach, and a favoured destination for dog-walkers and beach combers. Its popularity has been boosted recently as the location for two Hollywood films. 2010 saw a lifeguard presence on the beach for the first time.

The popularity of the beach has resulted in increased pressure most obviously seen in traffic congestion at peak times at the pinch points. The car park is limited, and many people park along the road. Camping in the dunes and overnight stays in lay-bys are recurring issues and hard to enforce.

Ownership is divided between the National Trust and the Angle Estate, with the National Park being responsible for the management of the foreshore. There has been a long history of collaboration between the interested parties including the Community Council, CCW and PCC. From the responses to the Plan this is clearly a site that arouses very different feelings. Some people dislike the lifeguard presence but many recognise its value and it is unlikely that the service, having been established, will be withdrawn. Car parking also arouses strong views. The loss of the through road because of coastal retreat is recognised as a possibility but probably is beyond the life of this Plan. One thing seems clear, in the summer this is a site where the qualities of remoteness, the environment and the undeveloped coastline are increasingly being placed under pressure.

### Management concerns in the Beach Coast RCA

**Whitesands** is one of the busiest beaches in the county. Close to the city of St Davids, the car park and café are owned by the City Council. The car park is right on the back of the beach and on peak days at least 3 other fields are used for parking with long queues along narrow roads shared with pedestrians, cyclists and buses. The narrow coastal strip out to St Davids Head is one of the most heavily used stretches of Coast Path.

Reducing issues of overcrowding, road congestion and difficult bus access without damaging the experience is not easy. Respondents showed a wide range of views on this site.

Clear priorities are:

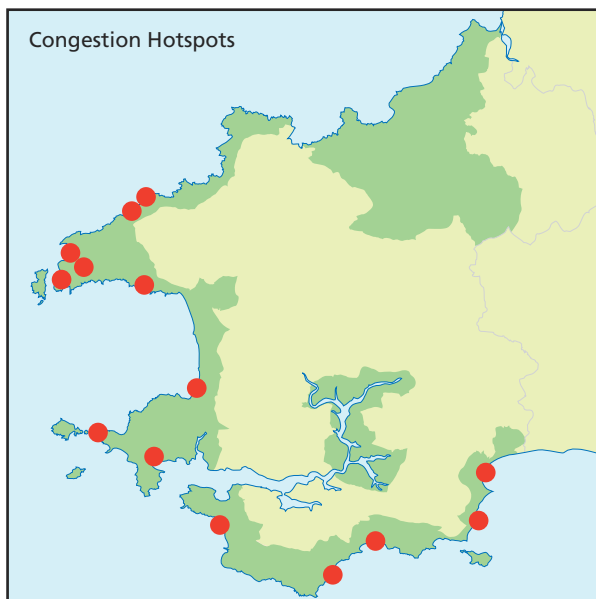
1. Take action to make access by bus/cycle or foot more attractive and easy.
2. Provision of well located overflow car parking is important but overflow should not be unlimited.
3. Additional embarkation of passengers onto commercial water craft would not be welcome (but would be hard to limit).

This is a site where a meeting of the partners involved in management and landownership should take place on a regular basis to try to develop a more proactive management approach.

	All Activities	Main Activities
Visiting natural attractions	61%	20%
Short walk (up to 2 hours)	65%	8%
Passive beach activities	46%	8%
Visiting friends or relatives	20%	8%
Active beach activities	31%	7%
Visiting family/theme park or activities park	22%	7%
Long walk (over 2 hours)	23%	6%
Driving around and sightseeing from car	48%	5%
Visiting historic, heritage & cultural sites	43%	5%
Eating and drinking out	63%	4%
Shopping (e.g. arts, crafts, local produce)	52%	4%
Attending an event/show/festival	16%	4%
Water sports	12%	4%
Wildlife watching	26%	1%
Boat trips (e.g. wildlife trips)	18%	1%
Fishing	8%	1%
Visiting gardens/garden centres	13%	0%
Mountain biking/cycling	5%	0%
Horse riding	4%	0%
Golf	3%	0%
None	0%	1%
Other	7%	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>585%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1 Activities undertaken by visitors in Pembrokeshire.**

Source Pembrokeshire Visitor Survey 2007/2008. The first column shows responses from people when asked which activities they had undertaken during their trip. On average, visitors took part in about six activities (585%). The second column shows responses when asked about the main activity carried out whilst visiting. Visiting natural attractions (e.g. coastline, countryside, Islands, nature reserves etc.) suggests the natural beauty of Pembrokeshire remains one of the strongest features for attracting visitors.



and the coast. These well-established larger centres have different congestion problems with higher numbers, better road access, parking and traffic management.

### 2.2.2 Noise and wildlife disturbance

In recreation the main noise disturbance is from powered vehicles. Levels of off-road vehicle use on land are very low in Pembrokeshire. However the last fifteen years have seen an increase in powered craft use including private boat owners and commercial wildlife boat trips particularly around the islands. This causes concern because of potential wildlife disturbance, particularly during breeding seasons. Some species have become more tolerant of disturbance around Ramsey, but only in this area. These are long-lived species such as seals and some seabirds that tend to habitually use the area and thus this could be viewed as learned behaviour. In other areas, species are less tolerant to disturbance, while concern still remains at Ramsey.

There are complaints from other users that the experience

of tranquillity and wildness, which they come for, are damaged by the presence of so many watercraft but on the other hand those who are on the boats gain a unique experience of wildlife which is clearly highly valued. The Pembrokeshire Marine Code has gone some way to address concerns but the question of capacity remains.

### 2.2.3 Litter

Recreational users can leave litter, which endangers wildlife and spoils other users' enjoyment of the National Park. Sea-borne marine litter (not usually from

recreational activity) is a major issue especially on West facing beaches and the islands, although the PCC provides beach-cleaning services focussed on award beaches. Keep Wales Tidy coordinates over 20 volunteer groups under the Tidy Towns project who clean beaches whilst Neptune's Army of Rubbish Cleaners, a volunteer divers' organisation, carries out underwater clean ups often focused on tackle lost by anglers. On the coast, wild camping and fires/barbecues can leave litter behind, especially in the dune systems behind more accessible beaches.





## Dogs

The ability to bring dogs on holiday is a key selling point for holidays in the UK and dog walking has a valuable recreational health benefit for both local people and visitors. Around 13% of visitors bring their dogs with them on holiday and in some sectors of accommodation e.g. holiday cottage lets, the proportion is much greater. At the same time issues to do with dogs are known to generate more controversy than almost any other recreational issue in Pembrokeshire, these include;

1. Loose and uncontrolled dogs on beaches, farmland and common land and the Coast Path
2. Dogs and owners being harassed by stock
3. Walkers being harassed by farm dogs
4. Stock being chased and damaged by dogs
5. Dog fouling of beaches, paths, pavements,
6. Inadequacy of dog fouling facilities/bins
7. Inadequacy of dog warden services
8. People who clean up and bag dog mess and then leave it in the hedge
9. Disturbance to wildlife e.g. ground nesting birds at Stackpole

The main issues raised by people responding to the plan related to the importance and benefit of dog wardens, the issues of fouling and the problems of disposal of waste balanced against the desire for free access and the benefits of dog walking.

Views are divided about whether the problems can be solved more effectively by education or enforcement but in practice a combination is most appropriate. Dog control areas have been seen to work at Stackpole and may provide a solution on staffed sites.

There is a clear need for additional well managed bins but the servicing cost will be difficult to sustain in the current economic environment. After the consultation we will explore dog control areas and additional bins with PCC and also work with commercial dog waste bag manufacturers to encourage wider use.

## 2.2.4 User conflicts

The consensus is that for the majority of the time there are very few serious user-user conflicts and most activities co-exist peacefully across time and space. There can, however, be conflicts both due to large numbers of different activities at popular locations and to specific conflicts between two or more activities. These occur at individual sites, for example at beaches, which are in many ways one of the last 'common properties', slipways, and on some public sites. Selected examples of current issues include:

- Dogs on beaches and beach heads (fouling and behaviour)
- There are also regular complaints about dogs on private land interfering with stock and conversely concerns about certain stock who may seem threatening to users, especially when accompanied by dogs
- Personal Watercraft and other power craft with multiple other uses at Tenby, Lydstep Haven, Newport, Whitesands and Freshwater East. More widely, concerns about wildlife and tranquillity disturbance are expressed sporadically around much of the coast
- Beach horse riding, especially at Druidston, with other beach users

- Coasteering with angling at Abereiddi and Stackpole Quay
- Diving with angling and boating operation at Martin's Haven
- Surfers and canoeists with swimmers at Whitesands and Manorbier
- Kite sports with other beach users at Broadhaven and Whitesands
- Vehicles launching boats or parking on the beach at Freshwater East, St Bride's Haven and Newport, with other beach users
- Mountain bikers (On stretches of path registered as footpath) and Coast Path walkers
- Occasional 4 Wheel Drives, quad bikes and motor cycles on Dinas Mountain, the Preseli Hills, and most dune systems
- Unauthorised camping and parking of campervans

## 2.2.5 Future Demand

**Activity tourism throughout the UK is currently growing and with recent strategic developments within Welsh Government to develop these activities further, this trend is likely to continue.** The Sport and Physical Strategy: Climbing Higher outlines its aim "of increasing the numbers of Welsh people using the natural environment for outdoor activities"<sup>8</sup> whilst a number of other

strategies explore increasing recreational user numbers. The Coastal Tourism Strategy<sup>9</sup> has highlighted specific opportunities for Pembrokeshire in the diving, surfing and climbing sector with potential for a Wales wide increase in kite sports, sea angling, coasteering, windsurfing and kayaking. The Environment Agency's water related strategy aims to promote water based recreation to assist in reaching Government goals of 70% of the people in Wales to be reasonably active by 2020.<sup>10</sup>

**It is therefore crucial to take a proactive approach to managing these activities to ensure the long term sustainability of the tourism and recreation industry.** Key growth will occur in activities attractive to an older population, especially recently retired "empty-nest" visitors, and a younger generation with fewer financial commitments and desire for more niche active recreation. The big uncertainty here is the economic situation. The price of fuel, both of vehicle fuel to come to a relatively remote area and of aviation fuel if the price of flying increases greatly, may change the balance between foreign and UK holidays.

Visitors and residents will increasingly have more diverse expectations of recreation in Pembrokeshire, as niche activities grow in popularity and fewer people



Storm near Solva



Refineries on the Milford Haven waterway

come simply to lie on the beach. However, those activities able to be enjoyed by all ages and abilities, such as walking, cycling and swimming, are likely to remain the most popular in terms of volume.

The vast majority of people will continue to use their cars to get to Pembrokeshire, but once here, around 14% of visitors use public transport to get around. Train travel in Pembrokeshire will remain low relative to the rest of the UK given current network coverage, unless there are major improvements. If peak oil impacts on fuel prices as many expect, improved public transport may be critical for the survival of a visitor economy in the longer term.

The long-term decline in long main holidays in Wales may well continue, but this will be partially offset by increases in short breaks. The ratio of day visitors to staying visitors will continue to remain low compared to that in other National Parks, given the geographical location and relatively small number of people living within an hour's drive.

**In the Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey 2008 55% of Pembrokeshire Spatial Plan area residents said they would like to visit the outdoors more often.** The most popular activities that residents

suggested they would like to do more were walking 31%, watersports 10%, road cycling 9%, sightseeing or visiting an attraction 8% and swimming outdoors 6%.

### 2.2.6 Climate Change

The effects of Climate Change in the coming years may radically alter the location and nature of recreational activities in Pembrokeshire. On a direct level, the coastal zone, as the focus of this change and the most intensively used zone for recreation, will be particularly susceptible to rising sea levels and increased storminess, which may cause the loss or relocation of certain facilities. Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) provide a large-scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal processes and present a policy framework to reduce these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment into the 22nd century. We will need to consult SMPs when planning for future coastal recreation.

On an indirect level, the changing long-term weather patterns will also have an effect on the visitor market. Some of these effects will present opportunities as well as threats for Pembrokeshire's recreation industry. Particular aspects of climate change are:

- **Sea level change and increased storminess:** the increased erosion of cliffs and dune systems and flooding of low-lying sites around the National Park will inevitably alter recreational opportunities across the National Park. It is also likely that erosion, gulying and drainage issues will mean the Coast Path looks significantly different in 50 years time and may carry a greater risk of use for walkers at certain times of year (especially in winter). Increased storminess and wetter conditions in winter may also increase diffuse pollution runoff from the land, creating bathing water problems associated with nitrates and phosphates, such as occasional algal blooms.
- **Long-term weather patterns:** hotter summer temperatures (both air and water) may mean that more people will holiday in the UK instead of overseas, as the traditional Mediterranean holiday venues decline and fuel costs increase. More main holidays and short weekend stays are likely to occur within the UK, including more beach holidays, which is an opportunity for Pembrokeshire, but wetter winters may make it harder to market out of season holidays.

A warmer climate (especially warmer sea surface temperatures) would also change the delicate balance of warm water and cold-

## Cliff Angling

In many ways cliff angling is one of the characteristic activities of the Pembrokeshire Coast. It is one of the most popular and widespread activities, has taken place for centuries and takes people into wild and precious landscapes for a quiet activity, which is generally seen as un-intrusive.

Looking a little closer we find an activity which is associated with loss of large amounts of line, hooks and weights just offshore, litter which continues to damage wildlife for many years and which causes dismay to other users such as divers and coastering groups. Unused bait is often left in cliff crevices after fishing and the activity inevitably uses areas where there are cliff nesting birds and other wildlife yet we have no agreed voluntary restrictions as we have for climbers, coastering groups or canoeists. There are also concerns about the level of bait digging in sensitive areas for cliff and beach angling.

It is clear from the responses that this is an issue for concern and one where the PCNPA and partner organisations have not invested enough time or money over a consistent period. We will seek partners especially within the angling community and funding for a joint information and education project.



*Angling litter collected by divers in the Skomer Marine Nature Reserve*

water species, which currently make Pembrokeshire such a diverse marine environment. Inland, the balance of vegetation will change altering the balance of familiar habitats in the county. These changes may alter the recreational activities which are possible or enjoyable.

- **Awareness of Climate Change:**

as awareness of climate change grows, there may be an increase in demand for domestic holidays and sustainable activities, which are not inherently polluting and have fewer fuel costs. If Pembrokeshire can develop an approach, which combines genuine sustainability with high quality experience, it may be well-placed to benefit from these changes.

At this stage, building an element of sustainability into the recreational experience – encouraging public

transport use, consumption of local food or increasing environmental awareness as part of the recreational experience - can help the county to make a valuable national contribution to the process of change.

## 2.3 Opportunities

With the exception of a fairly small number of locations and a restricted range of (mainly motorised) activities, the **National Park still has significant capacity for greater levels of use, especially outside the summer holiday period.**

### 2.3.1 Inland Water Recreation

Access for recreation on inland water in Wales is a clear Assembly priority and has been subject to a detailed consultation by the Sustainability Committee. The opportunities for access onto inland water in the

National Park are very limited because of geography. There are only two rivers (Gwaun and Nevern) that are used for canoeing and these are only used in spate and only by accomplished canoeists. We concluded, after a review of landownership patterns, that there is little or no chance of negotiating on-water access along a significant portion of these rivers. We also discussed the matter with local canoeists and felt that these rivers are not seen as a high priority for access negotiation.

The only significant body of open water in the National Park is Rosebush Reservoir – the NPA have agreed in principle the creation of a public footpath along the eastern side of the reservoir and await Welsh Water's confirmation to proceed. The nearby Llys y Fran Country Park, also owned by Welsh Water is a country park and provides good on-water access (It is outside the National Park area).

### Milford Haven Water Ranger

The Milford Haven Port Authority and the PCNPA have worked together for many years to create a water ranger post, specifically to support the Milford Haven harbourmaster on recreation issues. This can involve patrols, monitoring, enforcement, education and assistance to all recreational users.



The majority of riverside paths within the National Park are open and available for use and to a large extent the easy availability of estuarine and coastal water access reduces the priority in this local situation.

### 2.3.2 Coastal Water Recreation

With the perfect combination of wild open ocean, calm sheltered estuarine waters, and secluded bays Pembrokeshire can offer world class water sports conditions. There are already huge opportunities for

estuary and coastal access with over 30 launching points (mostly free and unstaffed) in the county.

**On the Milford Haven waterway which has excellent marina, mooring and launching facilities the scope for more wind or person powered craft is considerable** although the capacity for fast craft and activities like water skiing is often constrained on the busiest days. On a larger scale, improvements to berthing facilities that could lead to a major increase in cruise ship visits remain a possibility. Partnership working with the Milford Haven Port

### Coasteering

Even if the activity was not invented in Pembrokeshire, the name was and the popularity of this activity has increased hugely in the last fifteen years. In 2010 eleven outdoor activity centres who are members of the Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter (POC) offered Coasteering in their list of activities. There are national meetings chaired by the RNLI attended by a wide range of stakeholders concerned with agreeing the minimum safety standards for coasteering, but no official national governing body. There are currently discussions about agreed national codes of good practice in which the POC Group is playing a leading part in developing both minimum standards for safety, and environmental best practice, but these agreements are informal.

At its best this is an exciting and challenging activity, making the most of the special qualities of the Pembrokeshire coast to provide a close-to-nature outdoor experience for large numbers of people who might otherwise never experience the wild coast. There are downsides though. As the numbers of operators increase, the key sites become crowded and levels of use can become very heavy. In one survey in 2008 between Porthclais and Caerfai there wasn't a day when coasteering parties were not active between June and September and on the busiest days up to 100 people passed along a stretch of coast which 20 years ago was not being used in this way.

Voluntary agreements such as those with climbers, to protect cliff nesting birds, have not yet been officially developed and in many cases, especially where the birds concerned are more common – oystercatchers, rock pipits, etc - there may well not be the scientific data to make such arrangements. Agreements that are currently in place are informal and voluntary, and not effectively communicated to groups visiting Pembrokeshire. In some cases, as at Aberieddi, the parking and servicing of coasteering groups is having a major impact on limited facilities, this has led to a charge for commercial parking being applied. In some cases the experience of 'queuing' for access rather damages the wild and free experience. At St. Nons some of the most-used access routes are turning into worn and gullied paths.

After the consultation it was evident that some respondents felt that voluntary agreements should be developed to ensure that commercial coasteering does not develop in the wilder parts of the National Park to protect wildness experiences in some areas, and to safeguard wildlife. Some also felt that for the busiest areas currently being used commercially a booking system may become necessary.

All respondents felt it appropriate to develop a code of conduct for coasteering and the Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter Group has begun to develop voluntary agreements, codes of conduct and environmental education for group leaders. It was also felt the Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter group should be properly resourced to do this work.

The group was also seen as being the best option to broker agreements about access at specific locations where necessary. Respondents called for the National Trust and NPA to continue to be proactive in their management of the coast for coasteering.



*Coasteering on the Pembrokeshire coast*

Authority and other relevant partners when planning for coastal water recreation is essential. Proposals and management of pontoons and moorings within the Haven are unclear at present but could impact upon water based recreation opportunities.

**The growth in wildlife watching boat trips in the last twenty years throughout the inshore waters around the National Park has been both a challenge and an opportunity.** It is really important to work with operators to ensure that trips are carried out in a way which does not disturb or damage wildlife and is clearly seen not to do so.

There is a real challenge in some areas to get a genuinely agreed code of practice and to monitor and influence activities in a positive and cooperative way. Funding for initiatives like the Pembrokeshire Marine Code are uncertain and resources for monitoring are limited but a voluntary approach must be more desirable for all parties than either a free-for-all or a confrontational legalistic solution. At their best wildlife boat trips can promote awareness, understanding and sympathy for conservation, and provide valuable local income and employment. At worst we have a danger of over-exploitation or legalistic conflict. The task of all in

Pembrokeshire is to steer towards the 'at best' scenario.

**Sea rowing, canoeing and kayaking on both the estuary and the inshore waters have been among the fastest growing activities in the last ten years and fit well into the categories which should be encouraged.** There may be scope for better sea and estuary canoeing information for both visitors and local users especially with the expansion of the sit-on-top canoe market. This should also highlight good practice and the need to avoid potential disturbance to wildlife.

**Sea swimming is a sport that was identified in the Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey as something local residents want to take part in more and has great potential for increase.** We could provide more information and education and encourage the formation of clubs to increase what is at present a mostly individual activity.

The number of local and visiting surfers has increased in recent times. The sport has the potential to further increase the amount of visitors to Pembrokeshire outside of the peak season because optimal conditions are often found from September to March. **Almost all of the activity centres offer surf coaching and have the opportunity to pass on sustainable messages of good**

**practice and to market the area for shoulder and off season repeat visits.**

There are however certain surfing locations where the provision of associated facilities e.g. parking, are near or above capacity at peak times. When providing information about surfing we will consider that some locations do not require promotion while others may be more suitable for an increase in numbers.

### 2.3.3 Land based recreation

On land there is significant potential to expand the amount of walking in the National Park by both local people and visitors. **The high profile of other more spectacular activities should not hide the fact that for the vast majority of users, walking is their main activity and indeed their activity of choice.** A small percentage increase in use therefore equates to far more people than a large percentage increase in a minority activity.

For visitors there is a need to clarify information about the opportunities available. This is a challenge both for official organisations (who often do not cross-promote their activities) and for the tourism trade who may not be aware of the opportunities and information sources which they could easily offer to their guests. **For local residents, walking is again the most easily accessed and promoted activity requiring no special**



*Sea rowing on the Haven*



*Sailing on the Haven*



*Learning to surf*



**knowledge, equipment or ability.** There are fewer barriers to walking as an activity and more opportunity for walking-related activities and resources to provide outreach opportunities. There is scope for much greater promotion of local walking and for initiatives such as exercise referral programmes with walking as opposed to gym activities as a key element whilst combining walking with **land-based wildlife watching could also provide sustainable opportunities.**

For younger people walking is often seen as too 'tame' when compared with more adrenaline fuelled sports such as surfing or canoeing but this is often a matter of promotion or packaging. If the walk is about exploring or has a purpose or associated activity experience suggests young people are willing to get involved. The Go4It project in Pembroke Dock concluded that for many less active young people informal activities like exploring, beach or woodland games or bush craft were more of a draw than exciting sports like canoeing or climbing which may be perceived as having a demanding entry threshold. These activities can also be pursued afterwards at no cost.

For young people and those without cars, cycling has a double value, both as an activity in itself and as a way to reach the activity venue. While the cycle training in schools to proficiency level is well provided, there is a lack of any developmental training for secondary pupils that would allow them to develop skills and

confidence to make a journey. Cycleways have expanded greatly in the last fifteen years with significant expenditure especially by PCC and Sustrans but levels of use are not high. **As the networks become better connected, there is a need for more coordinated promotion and training so that more local people can benefit from both the cycling routes themselves and the fact that they often give access to coast and countryside that has other opportunities.**

There is demand for more coastal cycling and there is no doubt that such a facility would be popular with visitors and local people alike. The complexity of landownership along the coast however makes the conversion of footpaths into cycle routes or bridleways, problematic. In 2010 the Ministry Of Defence worked with the NPA and the Countryside Council for Wales to open a new inland route, the Castlemartin Range Trail.

In 2011 the National Park Authority working with the landowner opened 11km of multi-user route at Pantmaenog near Rosebush. There maybe other opportunities in future to improve cycle and horse access in the woodlands south of the Preseli Hills.

It is worth emphasising from table 1 (page 15) that the majority of our visitors are more involved in sightseeing and more passive activities than in any of the more newsworthy sports. This makes key sites such as National Trust and National Park owned properties particularly important. Sites with a combination of car park, toilets, easy walks, fine views and ideally eating facilities are particularly valued as evidenced at Bosherton, Manorbier, Newport Parrog and West Angle. These sites provide a good opportunity to introduce new people into countryside recreation. **For local people there are other types of recreational activity such as the increasing use of allotments, community growing, and volunteering which can engage local people and communities in the outdoors / natural environment and in sustainability issues.**



*Horse riding*



*John Muir group - Bird watching*



*Kayaking*

## 3 Strategy

### 3.1 Vision

National Parks were designated in part for the outdoor recreation opportunities they offer. Enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities is obviously an end in itself; it also contributes significantly to people's health and wellbeing and is a mainstay of the region's economy. By managing the landscape that people come to enjoy and the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, inland rights of way, beaches and car parks that the majority of visitors use, the NPA and its partners manage and protect many of the most important tourism 'facilities' in Pembrokeshire.

**Outdoor recreation can lead people to have an increased regard for the environment and can generate increased support and commitment to National Park purposes and to sustainability in general.** In some instances, recreation can however have negative impacts on the special qualities, and on other people's enjoyment of them.



*Walking the Coast Path at Marloes*

### Our vision

We work in partnership to make Pembrokeshire a leading "year round opportunity" for outdoor recreation, balancing protection of the special qualities of the area, respect for site capacity and promotion of environmental sustainability, with enjoyment, ease of access for everyone, a prosperous local economy and healthy and active residents. **Ultimately, we simply want people to continue enjoying the National Park in a sustainable way.**

### 3.2 Objectives

**The objectives for recreation management should be progressive and adapt to changing demands.** Our overall objectives are as follows:

1. Raise awareness of the National Park's special qualities and the responsibility for maintaining them among all recreational stakeholders, so that the values of the National Park are integral to all recreational activity.

2. Work with partners to promote and manage recreation in Pembrokeshire to support local communities and businesses while maintaining environmental and cultural integrity.
3. Seek to promote sustainable year-round public enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park.
4. Focus public support for recreation which makes the most of the National Park's diverse coastal and marine environment.
5. Promote recreation to visitors and local residents, including schools, colleges and clubs and hard to reach groups. Encourage people to enjoy the opportunities presented by the National Park, perhaps for the first time.

### Principles running through the objectives

- We will base our management of recreation upon the principles of sustainability, diversity, collaboration, distinctiveness and quality.
- We will ensure that facilities are in line with both recreational demands and the capacity and values of the area drawing on the Compass approach when applicable (explained in more detail in section 4).
- We will monitor progress to the objectives on a 5 yearly basis and continue to monitor recreation demands, trends, impacts and potential impacts using the Wales Activity Mapping project.
- We will match our objectives with the NPMP, LDP and other relevant policies and plans.



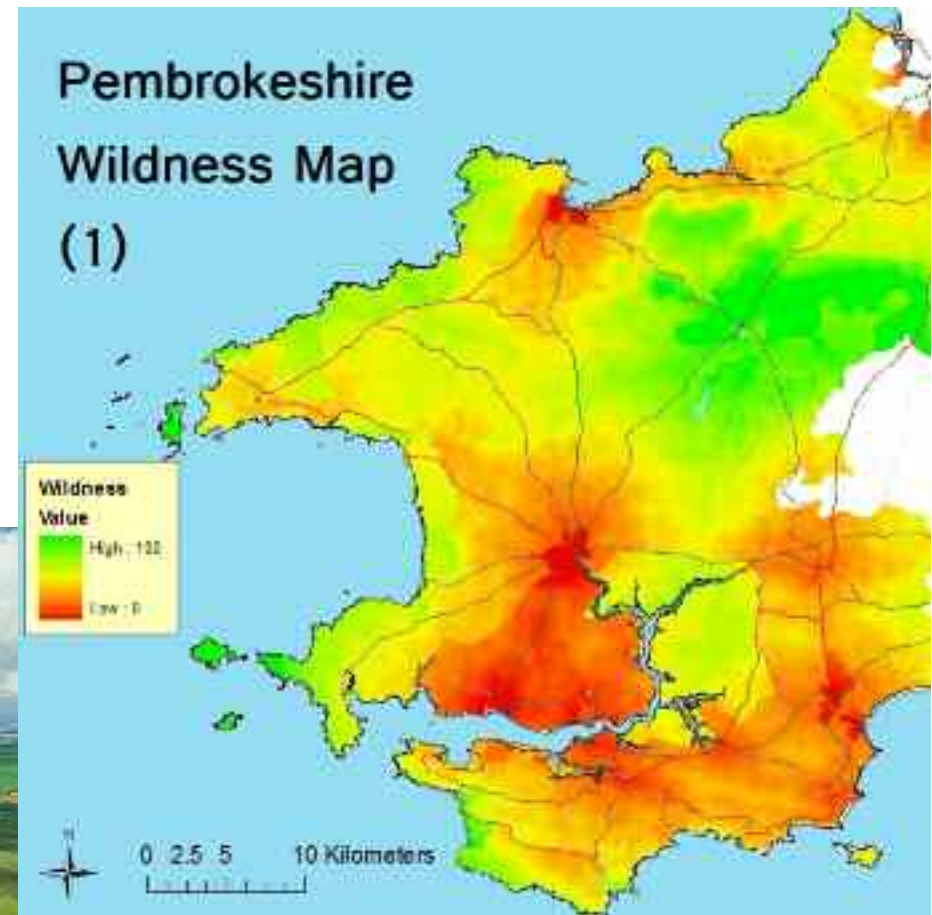


*Many of Pembrokeshire's most valued qualities and benefits are founded on land, facilities and development management services which need planning and investment*

## 4 A spatial approach to recreation management

### 4.1 Encouraging recreation in appropriate places

To help in achieving our vision and aims we need to take a spatial approach in looking at the National Park and the recreational activities carried out. This section explains how we will do that and the links to the LDP, NPMP and the Compass approach (P29). The wide range of landscapes, geomorphology and opportunities for recreation in such a small area is a unique asset to Pembrokeshire. **By looking at these qualities from a spatial perspective, we can identify the values of each area of the National Park and influence supply and demand to make sure that recreation is encouraged at the most appropriate locations and times.** The qualities most at risk from recreational activity are probably the sense of remoteness, tranquillity, the natural heritage and visual character of the area.



Wildness Map of Pembrokeshire (based on weighted distance from settlements, weighted distance from roads, distance from buildings, visual/sensory landscape value and altitude).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The Application of GIS to Management of Outdoor Recreation and Conservation in South West Wales. Quinton, S. [www.walesactivitymapping.org.uk/reports-3](http://www.walesactivitymapping.org.uk/reports-3)

To fulfil our statutory requirements we have to consider the array of conservation designations throughout the National Park including the marine designations that fall outside of the National Park's boundary due to the factors mentioned in section 1.5.

The Pembrokeshire Marine Special Area of Conservation (PMSAC) Management Scheme process identified several issues relating to recreational use of the SAC. Those recreational activities of most potential current concern to the SAC marine wildlife features were: sea angling, power craft use including PWC and Wildlife Boat Trips, anchoring and mooring and coasteering.<sup>11</sup> We will work together with the PMSAC Relevant Authorities Group and other conservation bodies in managing recreation within conservation designated areas.

Clearly, as values differ across the National Park, so will the tolerance of areas to different types of recreation. In general, we will promote those activities that promote health and an understanding of the National Park, and which are inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

If we encourage activities with potential to impact upon remoteness and tranquility (see Wildness Map page 26) it will be away from those areas where this sense of isolation is most valued and towards more developed sites.

## 4.2 The economic importance of the National Park to recreation and tourism

A healthy environment is crucial to this approach. Much of Pembrokeshire's visitor economy is dependent on those special qualities, which create the image and attract visitors. Recreation is a way of providing real economic value from the environment and providing a direct link between the local economy and environmental management.

**The environment of the National Park generates a total of £68 million in income, supports 4,653 jobs and contributes £81 million to the GDP of Wales<sup>12</sup>.**

The economic value from recreation will be optimised at a level where there are enough recreational users to support the local economy, but not so many as to damage the environment and thereby reduce environmental benefits. **By linking the environment closely with recreation, we can aim to encourage more people to enjoy the National Park and safeguard the environment at the same time, as well as highlighting the dependence of the tourism and recreation industry on the environment of Pembrokeshire as a whole.**

The National Park's shape and easy access into and out of the area also mean that almost all of the National Park's indirect economic benefits flow throughout the county and into wider South West Wales. Looked at in this way it becomes clear that, for the tourism industry, a successful NPA which is able to safeguard the landscapes and ecosystems of the National Park, is of fundamental importance.

### Intensive use of the Small Bay Coast RCA

Of all the pressure sites in the National Park, St Justinians perhaps gives the clearest example. Vehicle access is on a long, dead-end single-track road, parking is very limited and the area is of particularly high landscape and habitat value making large facilities inappropriate. Access to the sea is difficult, down a long flight of stone steps and onto an RNLI landing ramp. The inshore waters of Ramsey Sound are some of the richest and most interesting in Pembrokeshire with Ramsey Island owned by the RSPB as a Nature Reserve.

From this base we have seen develop over the last twenty years a wildlife boat trip operation involving 6 Companies, 13 Craft and up to 32 individual trips on the busiest days.

Nature conservation interest seems to have been maintained despite this high level of use. Many people have had a wonderful experience of wildlife and the opportunities for education are considerable. A number of successful businesses employing many staff at peak periods have been developed. All operators have been involved in the development of the Pembrokeshire Marine Code though agreeing a series of restrictions regarding access in this area have been difficult.

This is a site where future management very much depends on the arrangement made by the RNLI in pursuit of their new slipway. It is important that any arrangements for future use of the existing slipway involve planning and consultation with all stakeholders to bring a greater degree of management to this site. From the responses it is clear that this is a valued location where we will need to achieve a balance between long term conservation of the site and its surrounding coast and the important economic value of the activities.



*Diving at Skomer*



*Newgale beach*

<sup>11</sup> Pembrokeshire Marine SAC Management Scheme 2008

<sup>12</sup> Valuing our Environment - Economic Impact of the National Parks of Wales 2006

Recreational activities can broadly be divided into the following groups: The boundaries of the groups are not fixed. Individual activities may move from one group to another depending on the scale of the activity, the location or the way it is pursued. Commercial operations or large events are likely to move the activity towards a higher numbered group because of additional numbers or regularity.

Group	Main attributes of activity	Examples	Public body response
1	Has health benefits, is non-intrusive, is intrinsically non-polluting and is based on active enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park	Walking, cycling, riding, swimming, sea rowing, surfing, sailing	Encourage and actively promote, management minimal except to provide associated facilities and access
2	Has similar attributes to those above, provided the participants are responsible and choose their location/season sensibly, but the activity does have potential for adverse impact	Climbing, canoeing, coasteering, kite surfing, windsurfing, casual beach riding, dog walking	Encourage with responsible use, management to develop good practice and oversee out of season events
3	May or may not have health or education benefits, but may have public safety consequences and/or environmental impact if pursued in certain ways or at certain locations, and generates complaints from other users.	Wildlife boat trips, organised beach riding, cliff fishing, water skiing	Encourage only proven good practice or out of season, lobby for stricter training, insurance and codes of practice
4	Has limited health benefits, and by its nature or scale may compromise the special qualities of the National Park or character of selected sites. Likely to have public safety consequences and to generate complaints from other users. Is usually powered and has associated sustainability issues.	PWC, speed boat racing, quad biking on public land, hovercraft, raves	Only encourage in specified areas with strict management / licencing /planning in place/encourage elsewhere

Table 2 The main attributes of activities and suggested public body response. Adapted from NPMP (2009-2013)

### 4.3 Recreation Character Areas

To assist in this spatial planning we have divided the National Park into 8 Recreation Character Areas (RCA) based on the Landscape Character Assessment study<sup>14</sup> and recreation opportunity classes for Wales laid out in the Compass approach. The areas range from busy resort coasts such as Tenby to the hills and commons of the Preselis. The areas often have a coastal focus, reflecting the fact that most of the National Park and its recreational pressures are based around the coast. By defining these areas, we can highlight their different qualities, and develop targeted actions and policies to support them. More details on the character areas, issues and priorities for management can be found in appendix A.

This spatial analysis will underpin the NPA's attitude and those of partner organisations to changes in recreation occurring in these character areas.

The accompanying matrix and map explains the level to which each activity will be encouraged, according to the area type. Our view of recreational activities at a local level will be based upon these special qualities. We hope to provide an example by showing clear environmental and cultural responsibility in encouraging public enjoyment and recreation. **The following map, matrix and RCA's are simplified and have been designed to assist us as a management tool to encourage activities in suitable areas where there is capacity. We understand that activities have to be considered on a site by site basis considering the type, nature and scale of the activity and may not fit neatly into the categories in Table 2 or the RCA's shown.**

Table 3: Example of draft recreation opportunity classes for Wales.

Developed Formal	Developed Semi-natural	Accessible Natural	Remote Natural
Not remote	Not remote	Remote	Remote
Easy to access	Easy to access	Natural	Hard to access
Not natural	Semi-natural	Promoted	Un-promoted
Highly managed	Managed	Less managed	Limited management
High frequency of social encounters	Reasonably frequent social encounters	Frequent social encounters	Few social encounters

Source COMPASS: Adapted from McCool, Clark & Stankey (2007)  
An Assessment of Frameworks Useful for Public Land Recreation Planning

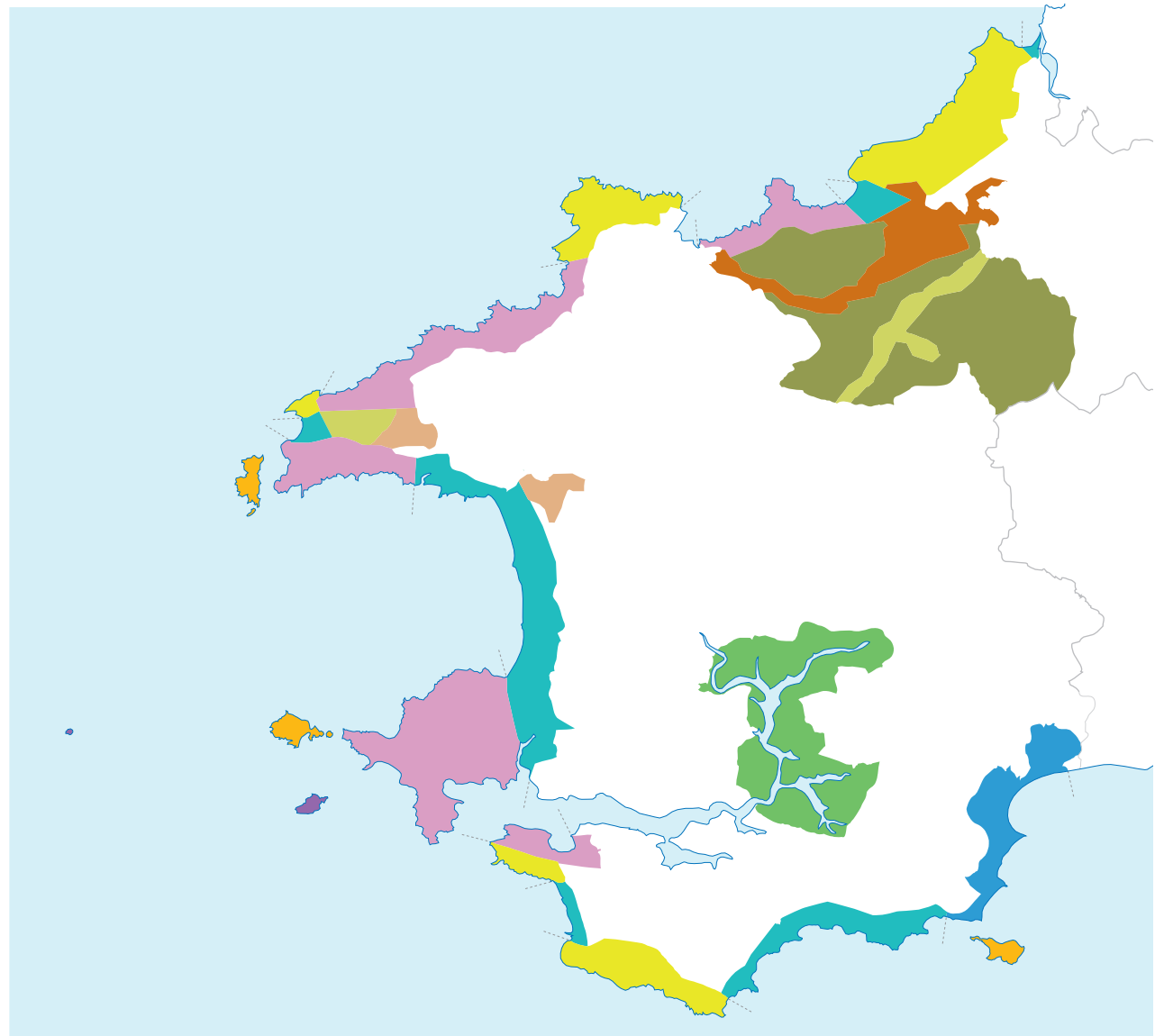
**Compass** is a new approach to outdoor recreation planning. The goal is to provide recreation planners and managers with a clearly defined, demand-orientated framework for making better decisions to provide and conserve a spectrum of high quality and diverse recreation opportunities. It provides a practical resource that integrates the evidence on demand and supply to enable its users to maximise the value and impact of existing opportunities, and to identify potential gaps and opportunities for recreation provision. The Countryside Council for Wales is the lead body in this approach.



#### Examples of Linked Policies for section 4

- NPMP E1 - Promote appropriate types of recreation
- NPMP B1 - Promote an ecosystem approach to land management
- NPMP B4 - Promote an ecosystem approach to marine management
- PCNPA LDP Policy 23
- PCNPA LDP Policy 45
- PCNPA LDP Policy 47
- PCNPA LDP Policy 48
- PCNPA LDP Policy 51
- PCNPA LDP Policy 52

<sup>14</sup> Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Landscape Character Assessment Study, 2007.









Map of Recreation Character Areas (RCA) based on PCNP Landscape Character Assessment Study and the Compass Approach

Table 4: Matrix displaying RCA, activity types and suggested public body response

<b>RCA</b>	<b>Resort Beach Coast</b> Developed Formal	<b>Beach Coast</b> Developed Semi Natural	<b>Small Bay Coast</b> Accessible Natural	<b>Wild Cliff Coast</b> Remote Natural	<b>Islands</b> Accessible and Remote Natural	<b>Estuaries</b> Developed Semi Natural	<b>Inland Valleys</b> Accessible and Remote Natural	<b>Inland Commons and Hills</b> Accessible and Remote Natural
<b>Recreational Activity</b>								
Beach Activities (passive)					n/a*	n/a	n/a	n/a
Beach Activities (active)					n/a*	n/a	n/a	n/a
Canoeing/Sea Kayaking							n/a	n/a
Climbing						n/a	n/a	
Coasteering						n/a	n/a	n/a
Cycling (Bridleways/lanes)								
Dinghy Sailing/Yachting							n/a	n/a
Diving							n/a	n/a
Dog Walking					n/a			
Horse Riding (Bridleway)					n/a			
Beach Riding				n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a
PWC/Jet skiing						**	n/a	n/a
Power Kite flying								
Kite Surfing							n/a	n/a
Land Yachting						n/a	n/a	n/a
Motorised Land Activities <small>(Private land &amp; vehicle ROW)</small>								
Power Boating							n/a	n/a
Rowing							n/a	n/a
Angling								
Snorkelling							n/a	n/a
Surfing						n/a	n/a	n/a
Swimming							n/a	n/a
Walking								
Waterskiing							n/a	n/a
Wildlife Boat Trips							n/a	n/a
Windsurfing							n/a	n/a

<b>Matrix Categories</b>		Encourage and actively promote, management minimal except to provide associated facilities and access	GROUP 1 table 2
		Encourage and support, management to develop close liaison with users and operators	GROUP 1 table 2
		Encourage with responsible use, management to develop good practice and oversee out of season events	GROUP 2 table 2
		Encourage only proven good practice or out of season, lobby for stricter training, insurance and codes of practice	GROUP 3 table 2
		Do not encourage in this area/encourage elsewhere	GROUP 4 table 2
		Not applicable in this area (* except Caldey Island)	
	**	Except Milford Haven Port Authority ski zone	



Angling at Bosherton Lily Ponds

## 5 Awareness, Promotion, Access and Infrastructure

### 5.1 Awareness and responsibility

The NPA seeks to increase awareness of the values of the National Park and give users and communities responsibility to use the National Park's resources in a sustainable way. **Recreational stakeholders should be given a greater sense of ownership of the National Park and opportunity to participate more in the National Park's recreation management.**

In pursuit of this long-term goal, it is important that environmental considerations lie at the heart of recreational decision-making. By instilling the value of the environment at the heart of recreation, we intuitively give it consideration and develop the sense of ownership and responsibility for the landscape that is needed. Most

people recognise that recreation in Pembrokeshire is dependent on a high quality environment, the problem is that many individuals do not accept that it is up to them to adopt best practice and develop new ways of working and playing to protect this common good.

**This Plan seeks a relationship between recreation and the environment, which is based on the connections, rather than conflicts, between the two.**

It is also essential that users and operators are aware of the impacts they may have upon other people. As with all Wales' National Parks, the Pembrokeshire Coast is home to working urban and rural communities and recreation must be managed in the context of the living and working landscape of the National Park, respecting the lives and work of local landowners, local communities and of other recreational users.

We will seek to ensure that when activities are proposed or introduced, potential impacts are adequately assessed, that agreements to manage or limit impacts are in place and that there is some form of relationship between operators and public bodies.

We will also strongly encourage activities, through relevant user associations and groups, to follow or develop codes of practice for each activity. **Our experience of the Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter and to some extent the Pembrokeshire Marine Code, is that those operators that sign up, take greater responsibility for the environment without the need for more restrictive policies such as bans or bylaws, which are often neither practical nor desirable.** There may need to be sanctions for those who will not comply but that should not be a first step.

#### Coast to Coast

200,000 copies of Coast to Coast are produced and distributed every year by the PCNPA. The newspaper has a 95% take up rate within Pembrokeshire, with 65% of people identifying it as a main source of information on what is happening within the National Park. 76% of local people also claim to use the paper on at least a monthly basis.

#### Examples of Linked Policies for section 5.1

NPMP E2- Remove barriers to people's enjoyment of the National Park

NPMP U1- Promote the National Park as an inspirational basis for lifelong learning

NPMP U2- Explain organisation's purposes and values

NPMP U3- Involve people in decision making

NPMP U5- Help people to make lifestyle changes



## 5.2 Promotion

Pembrokeshire is unique in the UK in having so many different recreational products on offer within such a small area, predominantly based around the coast. There is a good public perception of Wales as a provider of outdoor activities, but detailed knowledge of the opportunities for recreation is often less apparent, creating a gap between the willing participant and the recreational product.

Having said this, however, Pembrokeshire has made significant efforts to place the county in the activity market and to influence visitors when planning their trips. Promotion around the UK and within Wales is important to build up Pembrokeshire's image as a recreation destination, where people travel for a specific activity or can take part in more than one type of recreation during their stay. The relaxed nature of the county and opportunities for all skill levels can support this. If a genuinely 'green' approach to activity can be added, this is likely to make the area more rather than less attractive.

PCNPA has always been positive towards countryside enjoyment and the encouragement of appropriate outdoor recreation. There are however more opportunities to work with partners to actively promote recreational use of the National Park, to both local people and visitors.

### Enjoy Pembrokeshire

The PCNPA have recently launched a new recreation website which aims to promote recreation in a sustainable way. The map based website provides useful information on a range of activities from climbing and surfing to geology hotspots and rockpooling. It gives users top tips on how to minimise their impact when carrying out the activity in the Park.

We have only promoted activities in suitable locations and have avoided sites that may be at capacity or have management issues. Key messages from this Plan have also been included. The site also displays relevant facilities including harbours, slipways, toilets, beaches and contains a wealth of information on easy access.

The Enjoy Pembrokeshire website actively promotes Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter and Marine Code and can be found on the home page of the PCNPA website.



### The Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter

[www.pembrokeshireoutdoors.org.uk](http://www.pembrokeshireoutdoors.org.uk) was formed by activity and education centres working with conservationists in Pembrokeshire in the early 1990s. From an early stage the group existed to build up a relationship between the different partners to ensure that adventure activities such as climbing, coastering and sea kayaking were developed in a way which is sustainable for the wildlife and environment. The group has focussed on developing best practice to minimise environmental impacts, and on raising awareness of the special qualities of Pembrokeshire to activity staff to pass on to clients during activities. The group have also committed to work towards reducing their carbon emissions and integrating sustainability in their operations.



### The Pembrokeshire Marine Code

[www.pembrokeshiremarinecode.org.uk](http://www.pembrokeshiremarinecode.org.uk) addresses conservationists and wildlife boat trip operators, sea kayakers and divers and seeks much the same aims as the Charter. The group has developed a detailed code of conduct for all marine leisure users to follow which includes maps showing areas where there are wildlife habitats sensitive to disturbance. Environmental training courses on wildlife legislation / identification and best practice to minimise disturbance are organised for the group.

Both partnerships are managed by the Activities Liaison Officer and are coordinated by the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum.

**Personal Watercraft Management** in Pembrokeshire: Currently, the Pembrokeshire Marine Code group organise two PWC management meetings each year involving representatives of PWC owners, PCC, PCNPA, and the National Trust. A management scheme is in place at Lydstep (where between 35 -50 PWC are kept) with all owners signed up to following PCC bylaws and the Pembrokeshire Marine Code. A bouyage scheme, slipway management and launch poster with information on the Pembrokeshire Marine Code and best practice has been produced by the PCNPA for Freshwater East, and training for National Trust staff at Stackpole has taken place. PCC produce a leaflet showing PWC Best Practice. All complaints received from the general public are communicated to the PCC Beach Warden and Pembrokeshire Marine Code group with an annual report produced summarising complaints, and action taken. The last few years have seen a reduction in PWC ownership and usage, and a reduction in the amount of complaints received of bad behaviour, wildlife disturbance and nuisance.



### Go4it!

From 2007-2011 the NPA led a partnership to promote active outdoor recreation to inactive young people in Pembroke Dock. In four years the project has:

- Increased the physical activity levels of over 200 11-25 year olds from Pembroke Dock and Pembroke.
- Raised the profile of using the outdoor environment for health and well being amongst project partners.
- Documented information relating to barriers to participation and ways to overcome them.

Although funding for Go4it ceased in 2011 much of the learning from the project has been taken into the NPA outreach programme. Working with national initiatives like the John Muir award and with grant funded projects such as Walkability all help introduce new people to the Park.

We shall work as part of the Regional Tourism Strategy 'Open All Year' to promote recreation across the year, rather than seeking to increase recreation at peak times. We would, in general, rather see increased and longer season use of existing opportunities and facilities rather than pursuing capital schemes to build bigger or more facilities.

As the policy context has shown, recreation also has a range of social and economic benefits. Recreation provides a link for a variety of policies, and by encouraging people to take part in outdoor activities we support the efforts of others in related sectors. The development of the Pembrokeshire Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy, the Core aims of the Young People's Strategy and the concords between Sports Council for Wales and local authorities all emphasise the importance of physical outdoor recreation.

### Examples of Linked Policies for section 5.2

- NPMP E1- Promote appropriate types of recreation
- NPMP E2- Remove barriers to peoples enjoyment of the National Park
- NPMP U1- Promote the National Park as an inspirational basis for lifelong learning
- NPMP U2- Explain organisations purposes and values
- NPMP U3- Involve people in decision making
- NPMP U4- Tailor messages to audience and outcome
- NPMP U5- Help people to make lifestyle changes

We have an opportunity to see the National Park as the playground for the county if we can promote and manage activities in the ways outlined in this Plan. In doing so, however, we should not forget that recreation is an individual concept, based on individual preferences. It brings a sense of fun, a sense of pleasure, and brings together those with common interests and different backgrounds. This is crucial to its future success, and may not be adequately portrayed by planning and policy documents. **We encourage people to take part in recreation to have fun, and in doing so to learn about the fundamental values of the areas they make use of, rather than the other way around.** A day out on the coast has the potential to teach more than any number of lectures on valuing the environment.

Better use of the internet is also essential. The parts of the NPA website offering information on

circular walks and on the Pembrokeshire Coast Path have both been recently redeveloped. Both include information on ease of access, public transport and safety information. A recreational element of the NPA website which encourages responsible and sustainable use of the National Park was set up in 2009.

### 5.2.1 Promotion in Schools and Local Communities

We will work with partners and especially PCC to actively seek to promote recreation in schools and local communities as a way of encouraging children to visit the coast, keep fit and learn about the environment. This supports the Active Environment themes of Creating an Active Wales.

**By sparking interest in an outdoor hobby at an early age, we are investing in the future of the National Park, its environment and the people who use it.** We will also actively seek to encourage those sections of the community, who do not use the National Park, to visit and take part in recreation. As many people cite distance or inconvenience as barriers to recreation, we will do our best to improve access from urban nodes (section 5.3).

By promoting recreation, we can also increase social inclusion and mobility, get more people from local urban centres to the coast and encourage a wider variety of people to enjoy the National Park hands-on. The NPA developed a highly successful community project, Go4It, dedicated to improving the fitness of 11-25 year olds through outdoor activities and continues the approach through the work of the ranger service.

We will seek to build on this with the support of partner organisations, to reach into sections of the community who do not currently take part in outdoor recreation and provide opportunities for them to do so whilst also supporting partner initiatives such as the Sports Pembrokeshire Action Plan.

### 5.3 Access

This Recreation Plan aims to bring people closer to a greater quantity and quality of outdoor recreation. **With 76% of local people saying they use the paths in the National Park and with walking as the most popular activity among visitors, it is clear that walking is the dominant recreational activity in the National Park.** In this Plan it has a fairly low profile, this is partly because there is already a full Rights of Way Improvement Plan covering walking and riding in the National Park. We

see the network of public paths as a crucial resource for enjoyment and we will work together with PCC to deliver the vision of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) for Pembrokeshire. In 2009 86% (880 km) of the total public rights of way network in the National Park was open. Good progress has been made towards creating a fully integrated network, which is friendly to cyclists, riders and walkers and which promotes alternatives to motorised transport for those staying within the National Park.

Along with the ROWIP we will work with partners to deliver the aims of The Walking and Cycling Action Plan for Wales which promotes an increase in walking and cycling - and consequently less dependence on the car. As CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cars represent 13% of the UK total, making more trips on foot or by cycling can help in making the lifestyle changes needed to combat climate change.

**The NPA maintains valued relationships with landowners through its ranger services, conservation and access teams. These relationships, often built up over many years, are essential to National Park management and in particular for managing opportunities for access.** Maintaining this two-way

### Pembrokeshire Coast Path

The 300 kilometre Coast Path provides the backbone for the National Park, and is consistently regarded as the Park's most appreciated and symbolic feature. It is also one of the most economically valuable assets of the county. The Coast Path is supported by the Inland Rights of Way network and coastal shuttle bus services, which allow people to take circular routes or take in one stretch of the Path at a time.

As well as a recreational and educational asset in itself, the Coast Path links other recreational activities as it weaves around the headlands and bays and between coastal settlements. The views from the Path and opportunities to see wildlife are some of the most highly prized experiences for all visitors, residents and tourists. In recent years, efforts to improve ease of use have seen a reduction of stiles from 500 to under 100.

The Pembrokeshire Coast Path is one of only three National Trails in Wales with the management funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, the Countryside Council for Wales and the Pembrokeshire Coast NPA. Pembrokeshire County Council manages urban sections of the route outside the National Park. Most of the route is on private land and the Authority acknowledges the support of many landowners including the National Trust and Ministry Of Defence.



### Surf Lifesaving

Pembrokeshire has Surf lifesaving Clubs established on five main beaches. Poppit Sands, Newport, Whitesands, Newgale and Tenby South Beach.

The clubs are active during the summer months and hold regular club nights and weekend activity. They provide opportunities for both Children and Adults to train in surf lifesaving, beach safety related skills and fitness activity.

Some of the clubs are active on the competitive scene and regularly compete in surf life saving championships. Welsh and British Surf Life Saving Championships have been hosted by Pembrokeshire Clubs over the years.

The clubs work closely with both PCC and the RNLi to ensure an integrated approach to beach and water safety. PCC, who have responsibility for aspects of water safety have formed a partnership with the RNLi to provide professional lifeguard services during the summer months. RNLi lifeguards are deployed on eleven of the county's beaches during the peak summer months and can be clearly recognised by their red and yellow livery.

RNLi Lifeguards are operational on:

- Poppit Sands
- Newport Sands
- Whitesands
- Newgale
- Broad Haven
- Tenby, South, Castle and North beaches
- Saundersfoot
- Amroth
- Freshwater West

### PCNPA Outreach Programme

The NPA has worked with a variety of community groups for many years through our core work. However, it has been increasingly recognised that some groups in society are underrepresented in countryside recreation. Since 2003 the Education Team has been running an outreach programme which targets specific 'hard to reach' local groups. The programme aims to identify the needs of these groups and work with them to remove the barriers which may prevent them enjoying the National Park.

In order to identify groups and individuals we have worked closely with a range of other bodies such as the PCC Disabilities Team, *Health Challenge Pembrokeshire*, *Steps2Health*, drug rehabilitation, PCC Youth Services Team, the Pupil Referral Unit, and disabled, rehabilitation and carers' groups. The range of sessions provided has included indoor presentations, site-based visits to Castell Henllys, Carew and Oriell y Parc, as well as practical conservation activities, guided walks and minibus-based tours to a number of selected locations within the National Park. A key ingredient of the programme has been taster days led by NPA staff which aim to give participants the confidence to revisit in their own time.

Over the 7 years that the programme has been running we have worked with a variety of groups and individuals. Our range of networks has grown and last year we ran 251 outreach events with a total of 2596 individuals participating in the programme. Evaluation surveys and anecdotal evidence tells us that many of those who have attended outreach sessions with us have subsequently enjoyed visits to the National Park on their own and have felt better for it.



communication is vital to ensure the smooth development of the access network and to anticipate any potential conflicts between local residents (especially land managers) and visitors.

The NPA's and PCC's ROWIP has policies to continue the improvement and connectivity of the rights of way network, including promotion, information provision and signposting. This supports participation in outdoor and countryside recreation. **Access for less able people and work to improve safety and security across the network are ongoing and having a real impact; stiles have been replaced by gates, more of the network is wheelchair-friendly, and many routes are graded according to level of difficulty.** Everyone who wants to should be able to enjoy the National Park and the NPA will continue to work with partners to remove artificial barriers to participation in appropriate activities.

For example, The NPA has established a network of web-walks across the National Park, accessible online, which vary between circular routes, gentle strolls, easy access walks and wheelchair 'walks'. Each one includes information on the distance and likely duration of the walk, as well as information about the area and its features.

In developing these opportunities, we should be aware of the fact, however paradoxical, that we may be promoting access to locations where solitude and isolation are key characters. Care will need to be taken in maintaining this balance so that the sense of peace is not destroyed through over use and provision of facilities.

### 5.4 Facilities

Recreation management is often achieved through managing the associated facilities rather than directly managing the activity itself. These facilities, such as car parks, toilets, signs and showers have the potential to increase the overall

enjoyment of recreation. Too many facilities may harm the image of un-managed natural beauty and take investment away from other areas of National Park management.

**Statutory organisations, communities and users have the responsibility to decide what level of facilities is appropriate at any given site.**

Where new facilities have been developed within or adjacent to the Park it will be important to work with developers to ensure that the best activity management systems are introduced at a very early stage.

There is also an issue of who should fund the construction and



<sup>15</sup> Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire, 2007 to 2017

<sup>16</sup> A Walking and Cycling Action Plan for Wales 2009 - 2013

maintenance of current and future facilities. Beyond car park, mooring and slipway charges it is unrealistic and usually inappropriate to charge the public for use of rural recreational facilities. With declining public budgets it will become increasingly hard to justify funding free facilities where charging is a possibility. There is a need to develop new approaches to facility provision and new partnerships with the private sector and user groups. Finally, the case for facilities investment should be linked to the seasonality of use. While seasonal tourism brings in significant economic benefits in high season, many facilities are under-used and do not fulfil their potential outside the summer months. Reducing the seasonality of recreation is therefore crucial to help to justify facilities investment.

### Examples of Linked Policies for section 5.3

- NPMP E1- Promote appropriate types of recreation
- NPMP E2- Remove barriers to people's enjoyment of the National Park
- NPMP E3- Manage coastal and inland access/recreation opportunities
- NPMP E4 Manage access to inshore and coastal waters
- NPMP U2- Explain organisation's purposes and values
- NPMP U3- Involve people in decision making
- NPMP U5- Help people to make lifestyle changes

PCNPA LDP Policy 23

PCNPA LDP Policy 45

### 5.4.1 Sites and Car Parks

There are currently around 90 car parks in the National Park of which just under half are managed by the NPA. Others are managed by PCC, the National Trust, and by private and community organisations.

Many of the car parks, which are often the visitor's first contact with the National Park, were built in the 1960s and 70s and would benefit from significant investment. The NPA charges on only 10 sites, the National Trust charge on 5 and PCC on 9 sites. This creates a pleasantly informal experience for the visitor but limits income for improvement and puts an uneven burden on those sites with charges. Charging on more car parks would also help to increase the attractiveness of the public transport service, which has been much improved in recent years and still

### Beach Management

Our beaches are one of the features that really makes Pembrokeshire special. Used by more than half of our visitors and greatly valued by local residents all year, they sometimes seem like the last unmanaged place in the country. In fact to keep them pleasant, safe and beautiful takes a good deal of investment and effort. For over 10 years PCC has led a Beaches Liaison Group incorporating many of the agencies which are involved in beach cleaning, lifeguard provision, beach awards, environmental protection, water quality and dog management. Most of the main beach-head areas are owned by public agencies, NT, NPA, or PCC and the vast majority of the foreshore is leased from the Crown Estate by the NPA or PCC.

We have developed an approach to beach promotion which identifies the main resort beaches where we would like to see Blue Flag Awards, a second tier of rural beaches where the infrastructure required for Blue Flag status would not be appropriate but where a Green Coast Award (Developed in Pembrokeshire) is recognition of a fine rural beach with high water quality. There is a third tier of 'Discovery' beaches for which we do not seek awards – feeling that the best combination of beach management for residents and visitors is one which maintains some un promoted beaches with high water quality and a low level of facilities



### Target beaches for Blue Flag and Green Coast Awards

Before any new beaches are put forward for designation as Blue Flag or Green Coast Award candidates or if any change e.g. from Green Coast to Blue Flag is proposed, the local community council will be consulted.

#### Blue Flag

Amroth, Broadhaven North, Dale, Lydstep, Newgale, Newport, Poppit sands, Saundersfoot, Tenby Castle, Tenby North, Tenby South, Whitesands, Coppet Hall

#### Green Coast

Cwm yr Eglwys, Aberiddi, Druidstone, Caerfai, Marloes, West Dale, Martins Haven, West Angle, Barafundle, Broad Haven South, Manorbier, Priory Bay Caldey, Penally, Glen Beach, Pwllgwaelod, Nolton Haven, Little Haven St Brides Haven, Freshwater East, Wisemans Bridge, Sandy Haven.

### Commercial use of Beaches

Most people who come to Pembrokeshire enjoy the area for the undeveloped nature of the coast. Over many years the NPA has sought to steer away from commercial development of beaches and to focus only on those facilities which have to have a beach side location.

In recent years we have seen a decline in beach holidays and an increasing desire for more activity driven holidays: horse riding, kite surfing, surfing, wet suit hire and canoe training all use the beaches. We will continue to respond on a case by case basis to commercial proposals considering the special qualities of the beach and whether or not the activity draws on the special character of the area.

### Greenways Bus Service

The Pembrokeshire Greenways Coastal Bus service provide a crucial link to coastal locations and recreational hotspots, allowing people to leave their cars and ease congestion on the often small access roads to the coast. They have proved extremely popular with residents and staying visitors and in 2010 were made more sustainable by use of recycled vegetable oil.



requires a good deal of public subsidy. Provision of new car parks or extended facilities will be very limited and will only be used to guide users towards more suitable locations.

Car parking facilities should also have facilities for locking bicycles, they form a good location for interpretive information and make an important first impression on visitors.

### 5.4.2 On-site Information

Information to visitors and recreational users allows them to make informed decisions or can suggest alternative options or activities. Site based interpretation has the power to increase environmental awareness, especially if used in the areas in which the message is directly relevant. **It is important, however, that information provision in the form of**

**signage is sensitive to the area, used sparingly and placed in the most suitable locations, such as next to car parks or in coastal settlements.** It may also be more appropriate to put information or exhortations into local publications, leaflets or Coast to Coast than to erect more signage.

### 5.4.3 Public transport Provision

We know most people do and will continue to arrive in Pembrokeshire by car. This is partly due to Pembrokeshire's geographical location and relatively poor public transport provision. There are train connections from South Wales to Fishguard, Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock, but these services are not on a scale required to displace cars as the main form of transport. Unless there are major

national changes in policy or cost, it is likely that most visitors to the county will continue to come by car.

Once in the county though, the bus network has been improved significantly in recent years and is popular among those who use it. Visitor survey figures suggest that 14% of those interviewed had used public transport with a summer peak of 16% and an autumn low of only 4%. The Pembrokeshire Greenways Coastal Bus services provides six dedicated bus routes serving popular destinations in the National Park, and this, as well as the county bus network, has become a valuable option to reduce car use on quiet roads. There is much more potential to encourage people who have arrived into Pembrokeshire by car to use public transport during their stay; at present car usage for quite short journeys is the norm.

We should recognise that demand for public transport will be lower for marine recreational activities, where people may have to wait and board buses with wet clothes in cold temperatures (especially away from summer), or where people have large amounts of gear. The coastal "walking" buses do however cater for a limited number of surfboards. As a consequence, there may be a case for locations with existing cafes or other facilities to provide hire facilities or drying or storing wetsuits and other equipment.



*Interpretive signage in car park at St Govans*



## Car Parking and Car Park Charges

Parking at most key recreation sites is adequate for most weeks of the year but may overflow on bank holidays and peak beach days. For decades many of the key car parks have been free to use. Reducing public budgets, pressure to make the most of assets, the need to encourage a reduction in car use and encourage use of more sustainable transport means that increasingly charges are being proposed. For many who have visited Pembrokeshire for years this is a loss of the uniqueness of the county, for others it is what they expect.

Many local people are more upset than visitors because they are used to a free service and feel that charging changes the character of the visit. The matter is exacerbated because while season tickets are available, the main car park operators, National Trust, Pembrokeshire County Council and NPA do not have interchangeable tickets. However the NPA provide a discounted season ticket which is transferable between any NPA car park and at both Solva and Newgale there are cheap local residents' tickets specifically for that car park. The introduction of charging by the NPA in 2009 at Solva does not appear to have affected the number of visitors, although there is some evidence to suggest they may have limited the length of their stay

From the responses, it is clear that while the concept of charging is, as might be expected, unpopular, the emphasis on promotion of activity and enjoyment in the plan seems to clash with the idea of charging. In fact the National Park Authority charges on less than a quarter of the sites where we provide parking and it is important to stress the importance of car park income in helping to deliver our services including the maintenance and presentation of properties.

Beach parking is an issue which has the potential to polarise views but in fact the only beaches where parking on the beach remain a major issue are Freshwater East and Newport Sands. On the former, parking is limited to vehicles launching boats and in the summer the slipway is controlled. At Newport, parking on the beach is seen as a locally valued 'tradition' and up to 200 cars may park on around half of the beach at peak times.

Respondents to the Plan were divided between those who wanted no beach parking on principle and those who saw very little problem and a useful opportunity. There was a general acceptance that it is preferable to have parking in a car park than on a beach but the conservation impacts are perceived to be limited.

### Actions

- Explore the potential for closer working with PCC and NT on car park management.
- Explore potential of discounted season ticket.
- Consider grass overflow car parks on a site by site basis when reviewing car park surfaces.
- Make the link between car park income and valued projects and services more evident.
- Consult on slipway charging system at Freshwater East to pay for slipway and beach management.
- Explore views of beach users at Newport to clarify attitudes to vehicle parking on the beach.

## National Park Ranger Service

The Ranger Service is one of the special ways in which the NPA is able to add to the recreational experience of the park. Originally envisaged as a management and 'policing' service, the rangers now work as part of area teams with wardens (who provide site and rights of way management services) and divide their time between practical involvement in access and conservation tasks and community links including contributing to environmental education activities and outreach programmes. They work with a variety of volunteer groups including the NPA's own Voluntary Wardens to deliver practical work and activities.

We have partnership posts with specific recreation management roles such as the Castlemartin Ranger (CCW & MOD) who provides information and monitors cliff climbing restrictions on the MOD land in south Pembrokeshire. We also have a partnership with Bourne Leisure who employ rangers who receive training and mentoring from their local National Park Ranger. This post has evolved from an experimental 3 month post seed-funded by the NPA in 1999 to two core all-year posts within the Bourne Leisure teams.

The Ranger role has the potential to integrate many of the National Park purposes at a local level and becomes a lead contact for the Authority in the area, working with community councils and local groups, schools, National Trust wardens, PCC beach wardens and a wide variety of service providers.



*Ranger brings the site alive*

## Organised Events

For many activities it is only when they take place as events that they require a degree of management. Events can be a good way to introduce new people to the National Park and may have significant economic and health benefits.

The NPA is often asked to provide in kind support for recreational events and as a rule will only provide such support if;

1. The activity can contribute to Park purposes – provision of enjoyment or understanding of the special qualities of the Park or their conservation.
2. There are demonstrable benefits in terms of health, local economy or promotion of sustainability.
3. There are no expected significant issues with damage to habitats, damage to path surfaces, species disturbance or any major disruption of other users' enjoyment.
4. The organisers have appropriate licences and insurances.
5. The organisers are willing to work with the NPA from an early stage to agree venues, timing and contingency plans so that any unwanted impacts can be reduced. Event holders should contact the relevant Community Councils and affected landowners.
6. If the event provides a good opportunity to communicate National Park messages.

Events which do not meet these criteria would not be supported by the NPA but we will work with organisers to try and reduce impacts and encourage good practice especially when these are out of the peak tourist season.

## Managing Commercial Activities

An activity pursued by individuals may have little or no impact; when it is undertaken on a commercial basis the situation may change. For many commercial activities, initiatives like the Marine Code and Outdoor Charter already provide a good foundation for a relationship to reduce impacts and manage activities and these voluntary agreements have reduced calls for more formal controls.

In recent years though, with increased levels of use and diversity of activity there has also been a trend towards licensing activities that take place on a commercial basis on land in both public and private ownership. Examples include licensing kite surfing on Newgale by the NPA, licencing of commercial coasteering by the NT and parking charges for outdoor centres at Aberiddi. This may be used as a way to generate income – usually associated with management costs, to ensure high standards of behaviour or to limit or spread out numbers of operators.

For many, one of the attractions of Pembrokeshire is a comparative lack of regulation and red tape but another attraction is the lack of overcrowding and the fine environment. The responses showed a clear division between those who saw licenses as a valuable way of control and those who were concerned about over regulation and increased operating costs. There was more support for controls for parking and facility maintenance than purely for access. Licensing should be linked better to the management of the activity, provision of facilities or agreed management systems e.g. Outdoor Charter.





Solva harbour



#### 5.4.4 Marinas, harbours and slipways

The Welsh Assembly Government's Watersports strategy, "Catching the Wave" recorded 11 harbours, marinas and yacht stations in Pembrokeshire. In addition, planning permission has been granted for 2 major new marina developments at Fishguard and Pembroke Dock, providing 540 and 260 berths respectively when complete. **The operation of the marina in Fishguard in particular will need careful management because to the immediate West the overfall areas off Strumble Head are important for cetaceans and rafting seabirds. The cliffed beaches of much of the**

**North coast are critical sites for seal pupping and much of the coast as far as Cemaes Head is greatly valued for its remote and wild qualities.**

These major facilities are supplemented by around 20 smaller harbours and mooring areas around the coastline outside the Haven, mostly locally regulated and charged at low annual rates. There are around 50 slipways and launching points in the county; these are mainly unmanaged and give free, unregulated access to the estuary and sea. Some of these slipways are at the end of long, single track roads or in tight locations which are not

suitable for launching increasingly large vessels. We will seek to encourage the use of more appropriate sites for large craft where there is better infrastructure and parking.

We recognise the social and economic benefits that these sites bring to the local economy. However the sheer number and range of launch sites means that it is hard to introduce management to ensure that users and operators follow environmental codes of practice and are suitably insured and skilled to operate their craft. From the point of view of sustainability, tranquillity and impact on other users and wildlife, we would wish to promote sailing, rowing and other non-motorised recreation in particular from these sites.

We will look for sustainability improvements in marinas and harbours and work through partnerships such as the Milford Haven Waterway Recreation Group to encourage good practice in dealing with such issues as sewage discharges, removal of scraped anti-fouling, control of bilge water discharges and provision of recycling facilities.

### Fast Power Craft

Among those who value tranquillity or who pursue un-powered watersports there is a certain level of annoyance and irritation about fast power craft and especially about personal watercraft. For others these are their preferred way to enjoy the inshore waters and they cannot see that they cause any harm. Once on the water, the scale of the surroundings and the comparative scarcity of craft make it hard to imagine that your activity is annoying to anyone, but for those who come for peace or live on the coast, even a fairly distant PWC may be intensely irritating. The NPA occasionally receives letters saying 'How can you permit this activity in a National Park' but in fact the Authority has no power on the sea or estuary and works with partners such as the Milford Haven Port Authority and the PCC who each have bye-law making powers.

In table 2 on page 28 fast power craft generally fall into the category 4 – the class that needs to be treated with most care. However the relatively small number of incidents and the widespread areas of use means that this may be a situation where the resources to monitor and police activities are both well beyond the capacity of the partner bodies and indeed may be quite disproportionate in comparison with the problems caused. Actions need to be focussed on organisations which can make most impact and locations where impacts are most important. This has been a good reason why the Pembrokeshire Marine Code, which seeks a combination of awareness raising and voluntary agreement has been a focus of activity and funding in this area.

1. The Pembrokeshire Marine Code has had a degree of success in working with both commercial boat operators and private individuals. There has however been a lack of support for the code from some operators and it has been difficult to maintain progress. The principles of the code however need to be maintained and promoted.
2. Maintain the current PWC monitoring programme to keep a record of incidents and problems
3. Encourage slipway and mooring owners, both private and public sector to require users to show evidence of appropriate training and insurance
4. Encourage PCC to update bathing water byelaws at the earliest opportunity
5. Continue to provide leaflets and information promoting good practice.
6. Lobby central government and the Welsh Assembly for increased control of power craft operating in environmentally sensitive areas.



*Power craft speeding through rafting sea birds*

### Examples of Linked Policies for section 5.4

NPMP E1- Promote appropriate types of recreation

NPMP E2- Remove barriers to peoples enjoyment of the National Park

NPMP E3- Manage coastal and inland access/recreation opportunities

NPMP E4 Manage access to inshore and coastal waters

NPMP U2- Explain organisations purposes and values

NPMP U3- Involve people in decision making

NPMP U5- Help people to make lifestyle changes

PCNPA LDP Policy 23

PCNPA LDP Policy 45

PCNPA LDP Policy 51

PCNPA LDP Policy 52

PCNPA LDP Policy 53



### **Marine Leisure development**

At present the Marine Leisure sector in Pembrokeshire is not growing as quickly as other areas of the UK. However an increase is anticipated and planned for the future. This has the potential to affect the levels of activity both in the coastal waters around our coast and in the access to water infrastructure.

The development of a new marina at Fishguard and potential marina developments on the Milford Haven Waterway will undoubtedly increase traffic along the Waterway and around the coast. This may be coupled with an increase of 'launchable' craft using slipways, augmented by the increased popularity of 'Dry-stack' facilities at Neyland and Milford. Boat trips out to the Islands to appreciate the wildlife will be part of this increased marine leisure activity.

This emerging sector will require careful management in order to minimise any possible negative impact on the coastal environment. However, it should be remembered that it is for the enjoyment of these excellent water-sports and cruising waters, linked with the clean environment and bountiful wildlife, that attracts this sector to the Park in the first place.

Where there are harbour byelaws and management there is a good chance that increased use can be managed to reduce major impacts but for most of the inland waters around Pembrokeshire there are no byelaws (apart from bathing water byelaws off swimming beaches), no potential to create such byelaws and no system to limit, police or even monitor activity. Most slipways and launch points are unstaffed. If we want to expand levels of use significantly it is essential that good information and explanation is given in mooring and marina guides and that peer pressure is used to promote responsible use. The Marine Code once again is a key initiative.

## 6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Recreational planning is an ongoing process based around the principles laid out in this Plan. Monitoring and evaluation will be a crucial step to establishing progress in implementing this Plan and the future direction of recreation planning in general. The data gathered by the Wales Activity Mapping project surveying levels and locations of recreational activities in coastal areas of Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Bridgend and Swansea Bay will be used as baseline.

Gaps in data and information should be filled to improve the basis of our decision-making. This level of monitoring is not at present available within existing budgets. If this Plan is to be monitored and developed, staff time or funds will need to be allocated both to develop the actions but also to monitor changes in levels of use and indirect benefits of recreational promotion. This will involve a combination of on-the-ground surveys, monitoring visitor numbers and expenditures, but also more indirect indicators, such as the state of biodiversity, local incomes and public health.

While these may not directly determine the effectiveness of recreation planning, they will provide evidence of the impacts this Plan is having on the wider community and environment. Furthermore, evidence on future trends will help to shape our recreation policies today. The Wales Activity Mapping web based GIS system and project will assist in certain aspects of monitoring change, highlighting management issues and will be utilised where appropriate in the evaluation of the Plan.

This Plan will be reviewed on a 5 yearly basis using the most up-to date information provided by the Wales Activity Mapping, in order that it remains relevant to the needs and pressures of future recreational activities.

### 6.1 Triggers to review elements of Plan

This Plan may be reviewed more frequently if certain trigger situations arise. These may include;

- Development of major new facilities that may have a knock-on effect on the surrounding environment.
- Introduction of new activities on a significant scale.
- Significant cuts in funding that threaten core services.
- Research indicating significant impacts of recreation on valued features.
- New opportunities being recognised or available.
- Implications of The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 e.g. Highly Protected Marine Conservation Zones and their impacts on recreation.



## 7 Conclusion

Enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities is obviously an end in itself; it also contributes significantly to people's health and wellbeing and is a mainstay of the region's economy. By managing the landscape that people come to enjoy and the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, inland rights of way, beaches and car parks that the majority of visitors use, the NPA and its partners manage and protect some of the most important "facilities" in Pembrokeshire.

We realise that outdoor recreation can lead people to have an increased regard for the environment and can generate increased support and commitment to National Park purposes and to sustainability in general. This Plan uses the special qualities of the National Park to place the environment at the heart of recreation management, and show that conservation and public enjoyment, the two statutory purposes of National Parks in the UK, are not only compatible but can be complementary.

While most recreation takes place informally and without adverse impact, there is potential for recreation to compromise the area's special qualities, and for

recreational users themselves to come into conflict. Capacity, congestion, disturbance, litter, future demand, and climate change are all factors that may have an impact upon the special qualities and our enjoyment of the National Park.

The use of Recreation Character Areas in our spatial approach should give an indication into our view of what activities we will promote and where. By considering the values which most people place on particular areas (in particular the mix of tranquillity, visual character and biodiversity), we can assess how recreation will impact on the wider landscape, and begin to define a compatible level of recreational activity, associated facilities and access. Whilst the regulatory powers and tools that are in place to manage recreation are not all-encompassing, our ability to raise awareness and responsibility, promote activities and provide access and infrastructure will aid us in managing recreation in the National Park.

Pembrokeshire contains some of the best opportunities for outdoor recreation in Europe, provides approximately a quarter of the total income in the National Park and has some of the highest proportions of resident recreation use in Wales. Enjoying the scenery and wildlife is

ranked highly among local people when using the National Park whilst visiting natural attractions is ranked as the main reason for visiting Pembrokeshire. Combined with the importance of recreation to people's health and wellbeing, the need to protect, promote, and sustainably manage recreation so that we and future generations can enjoy the National Park is a huge responsibility. We can only achieve this if we work together, not only with other public sector bodies but with voluntary organisations and everyone who uses and enjoys the National Park and its special qualities.



## Resort Beach Coast - Developed Formal

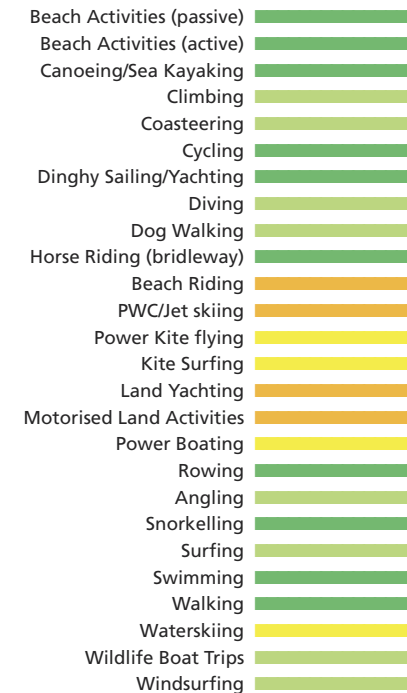
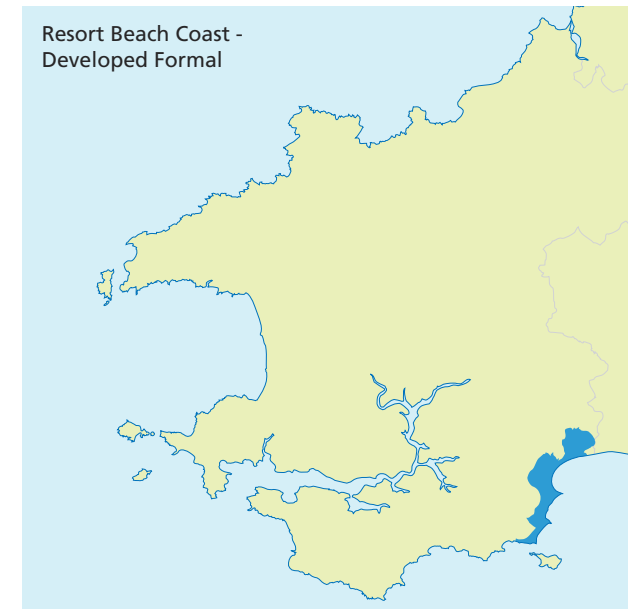
The resort beach coast contains the most intensive areas for recreation and accommodation, and includes the important towns of Tenby and Saundersfoot in the South East of the National Park.

Visitors are attracted to the coast for the fine and expansive beaches, fronted by attractive larger settlements providing more extensive facilities and entertainment. The beaches and sea are safe, clean and accessible, and offer a range of activities, encouraging family recreation. Access and parking is good though there are inevitable limitations in high season. Tenby and Saundersfoot possess attractive and developing urban characters based

upon Victorian and Georgian architecture. The area currently possesses an attractive balance of traditional elegance and beachside resort. The built environment and working industry give the area a liveliness relative to other areas of the National Park.

There are significant caravanning, camping and hotel accommodation opportunities. As such, the coast is the most intensively used stretch in Pembrokeshire, in particular for

motorised craft, Personal Water Craft (PWC) and speed boating. Other activities include passive beach activities, swimming, angling, sailing and canoeing, while the area contains one of the most popular sections of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, with high numbers of dog-walkers. Amroth to Saundersfoot has one of the few coastal cycleways in the county and there is a new link inland to Stepside – the start of a PCC North-South Pembrokeshire Trail.



For key see page 31

**Issues**

The main issue is the seasonality of recreation, which can leave resorts and towns empty in low season and put exceptional pressures on facilities at peak periods. The high numbers of people and range of activities have the potential to cause user-user conflicts in busy areas, especially at the coast and inshore waters. Motorised water craft in particular have the greatest potential to disturb other recreation unless used responsibly.

**Priorities for management**

There are no popular activities which should be excluded in principle in the resort beach zone. This area is already a focus for built facilities to cater for the beach market, as well as for the more intrusive activities. There is a case that, in comparison with the rest of the county, craft such as PWC could be tolerated in these areas, given adequate training and insurance. Having said that, both Tenby and Saundersfoot harbours restrict PWC use (apart

from organised trips) and Amroth has banned PWC launching in the last few years.

Smaller resort beaches with a low level of built development have a potential to become focuses of new recreation, especially where this can extend the season or provides ways for active and sustainable recreation. An expanded range of activities should not automatically be associated with additional built development. It is in this area however that there has been the most potential for commercial development of beach activities. Elsewhere licensing will generally be limited to activities which promote active enjoyment and which are not served by existing facilities. In this area priorities for management are to minimise user-user conflicts between recreational activities and ensure motorised recreation is conducted with adequate tuition, insurance and responsibility.



## Beach Coast - Developed Semi-natural

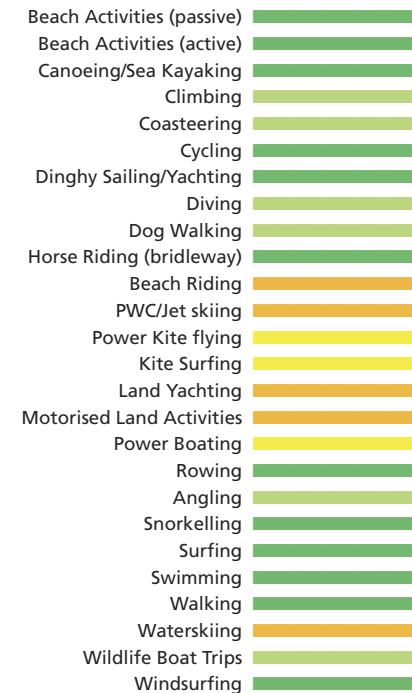
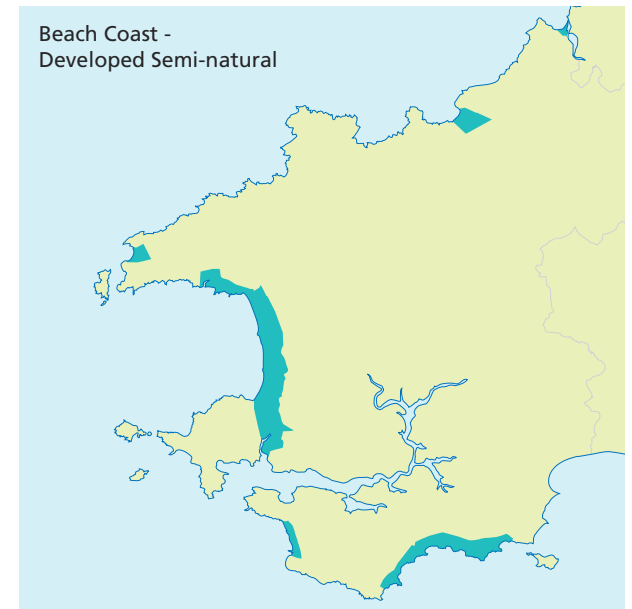
This zone includes the areas between Giltar Point and Castlemartin Range in the South, and much of the National Park around St Bride’s Bay, and covers the beaches of Freshwater East and West, Barafundle Bay, Newgale and Druidston. It is characterised by a predominantly low coastline, with small and large beaches and relatively easy access and launching opportunities. Car parking is generally good in most places. Popular activities include active and passive family beach activities, walking, cycling, horse riding, swimming, surfing and sailing.

The coastline is often spectacular, linked by the Coast Path, and small communities full of character offer recreation facilities for beginners and experts, as well as pubs and restaurants in selected locations. For many people, the beach coast and its surroundings represent the image of Pembrokeshire as a destination and support the county’s reputation in Wales and the UK.

**Issues**  
There are significant recreation opportunities in the beach coast for both local residents and visitors. In high season, however, access along small roads and congestion in the small coastal villages can be detrimental to the special qualities of the area, and create conflict with local residents. Much recreational activity occurs harmoniously however, and there is spare capacity outside high season, which could be utilised.

**Priorities for management**  
The opportunity to promote a high-quality, high-value product in these areas is great, as the scenery is often stunning, and there are facilities such as pubs and cafes in these areas. Recreation of a type and scale that will not cause major issues in the small villages or on the beaches/beach heads should be encouraged.

Care needs to be taken not to introduce too many urbanising touches into the landscape of the



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## Appendix A - Pembrokeshire Character Areas

beach coast. Traditional recreational uses – walking, riding, canoeing, sailing and so on – can be encouraged in such locations, depending on the character of the individual sites, but additional car parking and formal facilities should be limited and an effort to reduce car use should be made. The introduction of new access routes, especially for cycling and horse riding, are possible. High speed use of inshore waters is generally discouraged, although it may be more suitable here out of peak season than in more remote locations. Cliff angling is especially popular on headlands in this zone and more work is needed to make

anglers aware of problems associated with lost tackle and litter.

In this area authorities can promote beach use, and activities such as walking and swimming but access and facilities need to reflect the scale of beaches and communities. Opportunities should be taken to develop an improved multi-user route network for walking and cycling and linking local communities to the coast and to encourage a longer season. Beach-based hire should be limited to activities which make the most of the special qualities of the beach and which are not already served by existing facilities locally.



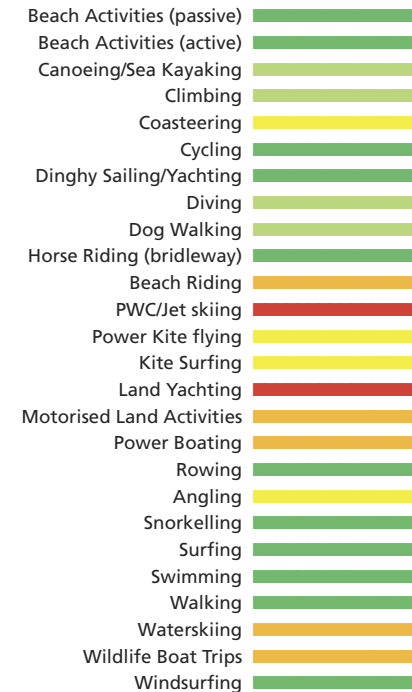
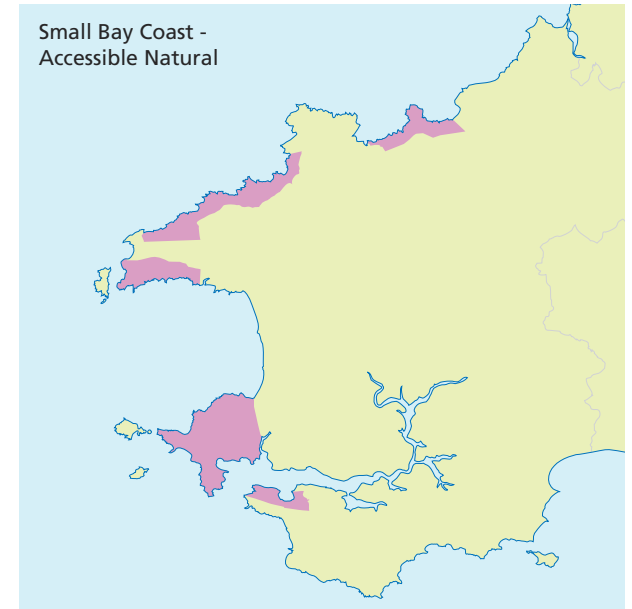
## Small Bay Coast - Accessible Natural

The Small Bay Coast is characterised by cliffs backed by agricultural land, overlooking small bays. Access and parking is more limited than the beach coast, as are launching and landing opportunities, reducing the capacity for intensive recreation requiring a large amount of space. Narrow roads and small slipways mean that the scale of craft suitable for launching here are often limited. There is a perception of greater tranquillity and wildness, with little intrusive development outside small coastal communities, most of which balance traditional industries with self-catered cottages. The coastline in particular is regarded as undeveloped, creating a sense of connection to the sea's influence and the wildlife within it.

Examples of the Small Bay coast include the North West stretch of the National Park either side of (but not including) Strumble Head, extending westwards to Carn Llidi (including the villages of Abereiddi and Porthgain) and eastwards to Newport.

The coast is also defined in parts by its opportunities for active niche-based outdoor recreation, often in small numbers but significant to the activity itself. Pembrokeshire has internationally important sites for several outdoor activities, such as climbing, diving and coasteering.

**Issues**  
As with the Beach Coast, most issues relate to the ability of the small bay coast to withstand the seasonal increase in recreation, and associated impacts of congestion and litter along small roads and in small communities. This is particularly true for areas used for



For key see page 31

several activities, or for the settlements used as embarkation points for wildlife trips to the islands. Certain activities, such as cliff jumping, are a safety concern, while poor practice or over-heavy use has the potential to disturb cliff-nesting birds, trample ecosystems or cause cliff erosion.

#### **Priorities for management**

Most non-motorised activities are encouraged in principle in the Small Bay zone. However, the access and capacity limitations of much of the area and importance of peace and tranquillity to the majority of users must be considered. The main factor which limits use is provision of parking and access and this should not be further developed so that the character of the wider area is maintained. Other activities with the potential to cause disturbance

to wildlife and geology are encouraged only with responsible use. Activities such as swimming, snorkelling, cycling and walking should be actively promoted in these areas.

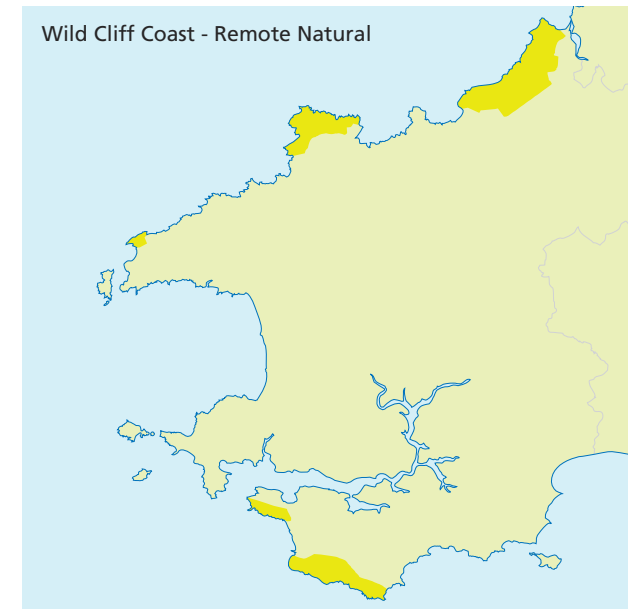
Active adventure and exploration sports have the potential to support the drive towards a more year-round recreation product, and are also a fun and exciting way of getting local children and adults involved in sport and recreation at a beginner's level. Greatest encouragement should be given to those activities with least environmental impact, and those activities, which support good training and codes of practice, such as climbing. More support and promotion will be given as good practice and responsible management are demonstrated.

This area is generally suitable for a range of specialist low-volume active recreation for both visitors and local residents. Certain activities which have the potential to impact upon each other should be managed or redirected and codes of practice introduced where necessary to avoid damage or disturbance. Parking and access opportunities should continue to be limited so that the character of the areas is maintained.



## Wild Cliff Coast - Remote Natural

The wild cliff coast is characterised by open wilder land and seascapes, extensive views, a high level of exposure and remoteness, high rocky cliffs and islets and sparse settlements. Intensity of recreational use is low, vegetation is predominantly grassland and scrub, with upland agricultural landscapes and more isolated settlements. Access to coastal locations, as well as parking, is limited and there is little capacity for motorised access or beach activities in large numbers.



Beach Activities (passive)	Light Green
Beach Activities (active)	Light Green
Canoeing/Sea Kayaking	Yellow
Climbing	Light Green
Coasteering	Yellow
Cycling	Green
Dinghy Sailing/Yachting	Yellow
Diving	Yellow
Dog Walking	Light Green
Horse Riding (bridleway)	Green
Beach Riding	n/a
PWC/Jet skiing	Red
Power Kite flying	Yellow
Kite Surfing	Orange
Land Yachting	Red
Motorised Land Activities	Red
Power Boating	Orange
Rowing	Green
Angling	Orange
Snorkelling	Green
Surfing	Yellow
Swimming	Green
Walking	Green
Waterskiing	Red
Wildlife Boat Trips	Orange
Windsurfing	Yellow

The feeling of isolation is highly valued in the wild cliff coast, supported by the absence of large settlements. The main recreation experience is characterised by landscapes unchanged in 200 years, by solitude and tranquillity (or wildness if the weather is the dominant disturbance). Often access is by foot only or from the water.

Walking is a predominant activity, supported by some cycling, swimming, canoeing, cliff angling and other "quiet" activities. Field studies and wildlife watching are also available. The use of PWC and fast powered craft would not be encouraged both because of wildlife interest and to preserve this sense of remoteness.

### Issues

Access is poor in many locations and unsuitable for large vehicles or launching of water craft, while military activity around the Castlemartin Range limits recreation to certain times. The Range at Castlemartin has an Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP) which includes a recreation section. A jointly funded National Park Ranger leads on recreation issues on the Range and this Plan reflects the issues identified in more detail in the

For key see page 31

ILMP. Facilities in these areas are deliberately limited to maintain the sense of unmanaged wildness. Active recreation is potentially farther from rescue services. One big future challenge will be to manage the recreation around Strumble Head arising from the new marina.

access, for example on Range West of Castlemartin should only be promoted (If it could be agreed with MOD) with monitoring and regular re-assessment.

### Priorities for management

Development is constrained but special care needs to be taken not to introduce discordant elements, such as artificial surfaces, signage and furniture into the landscape. These are places where the legitimate use of the sea or group use of cliffs or coast may cause an unwelcome intrusion onto the landscape so that facilities on adjacent developed coasts must be managed to ensure that users are aware and respect the character of the visitor experience alongside them.

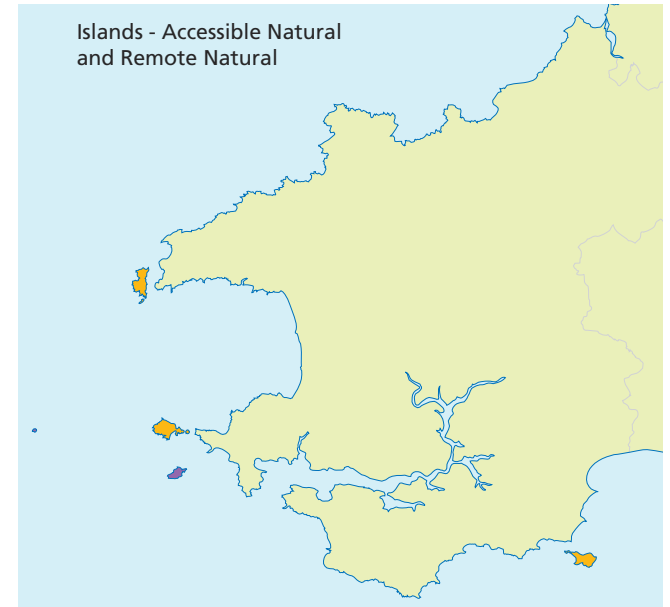
Quiet recreation in small groups will be encouraged, but it is essential that their popularity does not impact upon the character of the remote cliff coast, which people hold dear. In general, fewer events and activities will be actively encouraged than in busier areas: motorised activities will not be encouraged at all, and those activities that can be encouraged should take increased care and ensure they act responsibly.

This is an area where discovery and wildness should have priority. New activities should be introduced in consultation and with caution and intrusive or conflicting activities should be limited where possible. Additional



## Islands - Accessible Natural and Remote Natural

The islands around Pembrokeshire are unique isolated microcosms of natural and human activity, varying according to their location and exposure to the sea. They range from the settled island of Caldey, with low cliffs and sheltered bays, to the wilder islands of Skomer, Skokholm, Grassholm and Ramsey to the west of the county, which contain extensive and important cliff top, intertidal and marine ecosystems.



The natural heritage of the islands, and archaeological diversity are primary values to be considered. Most of the coast and waters around the islands are protected by national and international conservation legislation. Tourism and recreation are primarily dependent on the health of the natural environment and the integration of these conservation

values with recreation is therefore especially important to minimise long-term adverse impacts. The sense of remoteness and coastal splendour are also fundamental to the quality of the environment.

### Issues

Management of the land on the islands is easier because numbers arriving can be limited or are at

least known, people usually arrive at one point and can be greeted and briefed. The waters around the islands are extremely popular with a variety of marine recreational activities, especially diving, snorkelling, swimming, canoeing and kayaking, sailing and wildlife boat trips. Caldey Island contains a Cistercian Monastery, which attracts day visitors from Tenby. Care must

Beach Activities (passive)	n/a
Beach Activities (active)	n/a
Canoeing/Sea Kayaking	Yellow bar
Climbing	Red bar
Coasteering	Red bar
Cycling	Red bar
Dinghy Sailing/Yachting	Yellow bar
Diving	Yellow bar
Dog Walking	n/a
Horse Riding (bridleway)	n/a
Beach Riding	n/a
PWC/Jet skiing	Red bar
Power Kite flying	Red bar
Kite Surfing	Red bar
Land Yachting	Red bar
Motorised Land Activities	Red bar
Power Boating	Red bar
Rowing	Light Green bar
Angling	Yellow bar
Snorkelling	Green bar
Surfing	Red bar
Swimming	Green bar
Walking	Light Green bar
Waterskiing	Red bar
Wildlife Boat Trips	Yellow bar
Windsurfing	Yellow bar

For key see page 31

be taken with access around the islands at certain times of the year with selective zoning to protect seal and dolphin populations.

### Priorities for management

The main activities that can be encouraged with minimal management on and around the islands are snorkelling, swimming and walking. Wildlife trips can also be encouraged providing operators follow the marine code, which ensures a level of responsibility towards ecosystems and species. Zoning around the islands currently limits motorised craft at certain times of the year. Collaboration with conservation managers and island inhabitants seeks to find ways of encouraging sustainable recreation, which allows more people to see wildlife in their natural habitats, so building up future environmental awareness. Island recreation is fundamentally dependent on the biodiversity of the area and any activity which may threaten or impact on this diversity should be discouraged.



## Estuaries - Developed Semi-natural

One of the few sheltered stretches of the National Park, the Daugleddau estuary is a sensitive area of low energy, relatively low wind speeds and a real sense of silence upstream, even with its proximity to Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock energy and ferry terminals. The environment is characterised by mudflats, salt marshes and reed beds, with coniferous and deciduous woodland in places. The Pembrokeshire Coast Marine SAC includes the entire stretch of the estuary, showcasing important marine species, such as tide swept sponges and molluscs.



The area is popular with boating of all types, such as sailing, motor craft, canoeing and rowing. In the lower Haven a Water Taxi ran from 2008 to 2010. Walking and cycling also occur regularly, and shore angling and associated bait digging occurs throughout the area. The estuary is an excellent place to introduce young people and beginners for many of these activities. The area has important

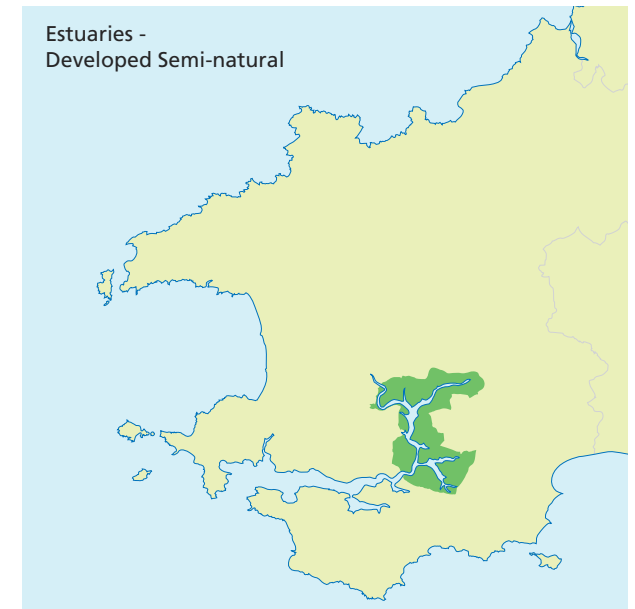
historic agricultural and industrial landscapes, which can be used for the basis of guided visits and exploration.

There is a Water Recreation Plan produced by the Milford Haven Port Authority (MHPA) in partnership and a water ski zone reaches upstream to Lawrenny, while the majority of the upper estuary is a no-planing zone backed by MHPA byelaws,

designed to reduce noise, speed and disturbance to the ecosystem.

### Issues

Recreational activities for large numbers of people have the potential to disturb the tranquillity of the area. While the ecosystem, while not as glamorous as the coast, is important for wildlife and cannot disperse pollutants and discharges as effectively as the open coast. In



Beach Activities (passive)	n/a
Beach Activities (active)	n/a
Canoeing/Sea Kayaking	Light Green
Climbing	n/a
Coasteering	n/a
Cycling	Dark Green
Dinghy Sailing/Yachting	Light Green
Diving	Light Green
Dog Walking	Light Green
Horse Riding (bridleway)	Dark Green
Beach Riding	Orange
PWC/Jet skiing	Yellow
Power Kite flying	Yellow
Kite Surfing	Red
Land Yachting	n/a
Motorised Land Activities	Red
Power Boating	Orange
Rowing	Light Green
Angling	Light Green
Snorkelling	Red
Surfing	n/a
Swimming	Red
Walking	Dark Green
Waterskiing	Orange
Wildlife Boat Trips	Orange
Windsurfing	Light Green

For key see page 31



the narrower estuary sections, noise is particularly intrusive for other users and householders and though the high tidal range means that wash from large or fast craft is not as erosive as it is on some rivers, wake is still an issue.

**Priorities for management**

The Haven and Daugleddau as a whole has a huge variety of recreational opportunities and space can be found for nearly every recreational activity on the water. Within the National Park however the Recreation Plan recognises that the upper estuary is more suited to low energy recreation and that high-speed craft should slow down above Lawrenny.

Promotion of the estuary would be desirable, especially for low-impact land activities, since it is not currently associated with the National Park in the minds of visitors. The area also offers residents and visitors a genuinely different landscape experience.

The importance of the mud flats for wildlife makes bait digging and shellfish gathering activities which cause concern if they are pursued commercially but the scope for management is limited. Shooting also takes place on some parts of the foreshore under a licence from the Crown Estate including a no shooting area on the Eastern Cleddau under the Daugleddau Sanctuary Order. A management plan is in operation for this activity which is generally very low key.

The promotion of suitable water recreation in this zone must be in full conjunction with the Milford Haven Port Authority, who manage recreation on the waterway.

This is an area where there is greater capacity for recreation. Management needs to be through the existing partnerships and more local use of the Haven through initiatives with nearby towns should be a priority. The development and management of new marinas at Pembroke Dock or improved launching facilities need to contribute to reducing congestion pressures from smaller launch sites.



## Inland Valleys - Accessible Natural and Remote Natural

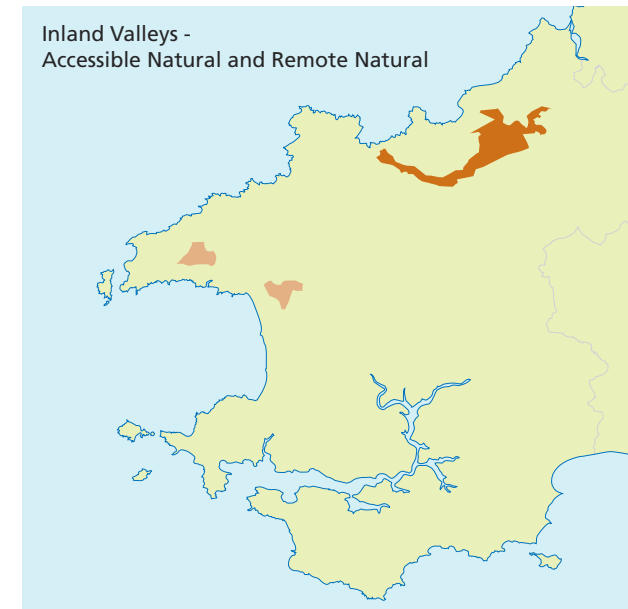
Lowland inland valleys are characterised by secluded low-lying woodlands, heath, secluded settlements with traditional cottages and a mosaic agricultural network. Many areas show evidence of prehistoric settlement and activity.



These are tranquil and often intimate areas, relatively sheltered when compared to the open coast, and which retain a traditional feeling due to the lack of or careful control of recent development. There is potential to develop the rural economies of settlements within inland valleys, while maintaining their cultural and historic identity.

These inland valleys are sheltered environments, which have been shaped less by the influence of the sea as the development of agriculture, creating an area of distinctive cultural landscape relative to other areas of the National Park. As such the values of remoteness and tranquillity and historic built resource (with current land use) are proportionally higher in the inland valleys.

Activities with the potential to develop include walking, horse riding, cycling (both lane cycling and mountain biking) and bird-watching, which maintain the tranquillity. Shooting is also observed in selected locations but if low key rarely causes management problems.



Beach Activities (passive)	n/a
Beach Activities (active)	n/a
Canoeing/Sea Kayaking	n/a
Climbing	n/a
Coasteering	n/a
Cycling	■
Dinghy Sailing/Yachting	n/a
Diving	n/a
Dog Walking	■
Horse Riding (bridleway)	■
Beach Riding	n/a
PWC/Jet skiing	n/a
Power Kite flying	■
Kite Surfing	n/a
Land Yachting	n/a
Motorised Land Activities	■
Power Boating	n/a
Rowing	n/a
Angling	■
Snorkelling	n/a
Surfing	n/a
Swimming	n/a
Walking	■
Waterskiing	n/a
Wildlife Boat Trips	n/a
Windsurfing	n/a

For key see page 31

**Issues**

There are fewer direct conflicts between recreation and the environment in inland areas, partly due to the lower numbers and lower range of activities possible in these locations. Congestion at small car parks and on small lanes can, however, occur at certain times of year. Recreation must also respect the agricultural landscape and working communities of the local population.

**Priorities for management**

There is potential in the inland valleys to use the development of the rights of way network to establish walking, cycling and horse riding throughout these areas, which have little impact upon the sense of peace unless large numbers are involved. Facilities should be limited outside of settlements to appropriate signage and every encouragement to use public transport or cycle to destinations should be given.



## Inland Commons and Hills - Accessible and Remote Natural

This area is characterised by open expansive upland areas, often occupied for thousands of years, with distinctive views from hilltops. Most of the inland hills rise above 100 metres to well over 300 metres, with a maximum of 536 metres. Much of the landscape is mountainous and exposed, with open moorland and heath. There are significant areas of coniferous woodland, especially on the southern slopes. The Preseli Hills have exceptional geological value, having supplied the dolerite (bluestone) for the Stonehenge inner circle.



There is a sense of remoteness and exposure on these broad inland hills that is distinct from the remoteness felt at coastal locations, supported by the altitude and relative inaccessibility. The value of the historic landscape and the past human influence (such as evidence of past settlements or ritual sites) adds to this sense of place, of what

has gone before, rather than how the sea is shaping the coast in future.

These inland hills offer recreation for walkers, dog-walkers and cyclists, although the area is also used for orienteering, motorised bikes and even snow-sports when conditions allow. The range of

activities here is lower than at the coast, but most non-motorised activities can be encouraged as their use is low relative to coastal hotspots. A new horse-riding trail was opened over the Preseli Hills in 2008 by PLANED and a permissive Bridleway across some of the St Davids Commons has been agreed by the NPA with landowners



Beach Activities (passive)	n/a
Beach Activities (active)	n/a
Canoeing/Sea Kayaking	n/a
Climbing	■
Coasteering	n/a
Cycling	■
Dinghy Sailing/Yachting	n/a
Diving	n/a
Dog Walking	■
Horse Riding (bridleway)	■
Beach Riding	n/a
PWC/Jet skiing	n/a
Power Kite flying	■
Kite Surfing	n/a
Land Yachting	n/a
Motorised Land Activities	■
Power Boating	n/a
Rowing	n/a
Angling	■
Snorkelling	n/a
Surfing	n/a
Swimming	n/a
Walking	■
Waterskiing	n/a
Wildlife Boat Trips	n/a
Windsurfing	n/a

For key see page 31

including the NT and has increased access opportunities.

**Issues**

Issues on the inland commons mainly relate to the impact on existing land use of recreation, as well as impacts upon the sense of remoteness and exposure for other recreational users. Erosion along paths is also possible in the most well-used areas. The rights of way network and treatment of common land requires a different approach to signage and waymarking to identify routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Responsible use – for example by dog walkers and mountain bikes – is important but given that, there are few

management issues with present levels of use. A relatively new activity – paragliding – is becoming increasingly popular and causing concern to local graziers. The NPA and Outdoor Charter Group are seeking agreement between users, graziers and local farmers.

**Priorities for management**

Recreation should be promoted with the knowledge and support of local landowners and communities, and it should be clearly marked, albeit with minimal signage, where walking, cycling, riding and so on can be enjoyed, so that users do not stray onto unsuitable land. Low-scale recreation can be encouraged and promoted, especially that which

makes use of the cultural landscape. Vehicle recreation is inappropriate in most of these areas as they have neither legal access and nor robust route surfaces.

There is particular opportunity in the wooded areas on the southern slopes to develop multi-user routes and to examine the potential for more technical mountain bike trails which are generally lacking in Pembrokeshire. Historic and geological themes are particularly important in these areas.

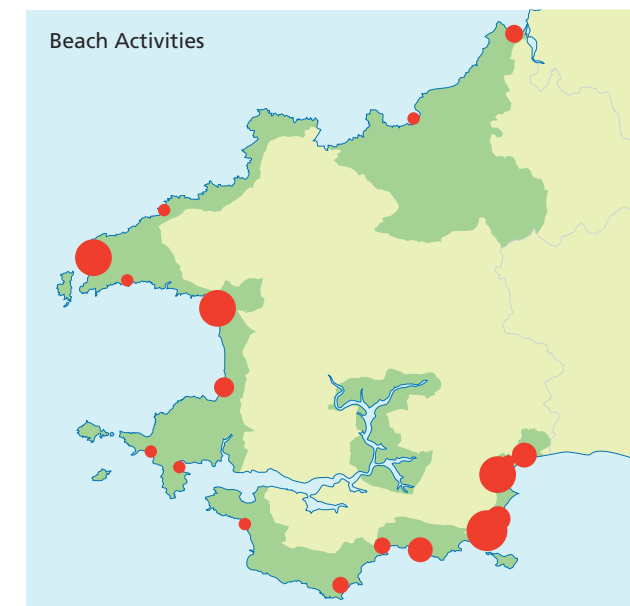




The user levels and mapping in this section have been taken from the Wales Activity Mapping project, formerly the South West Wales Recreation Audit and simplified. Not all activities have accompanying maps and not all locations for each activity are shown. The dots are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities. For more spatial information and data see [www.walesactivitymapping.org.uk/](http://www.walesactivitymapping.org.uk/)

### Beach Activities

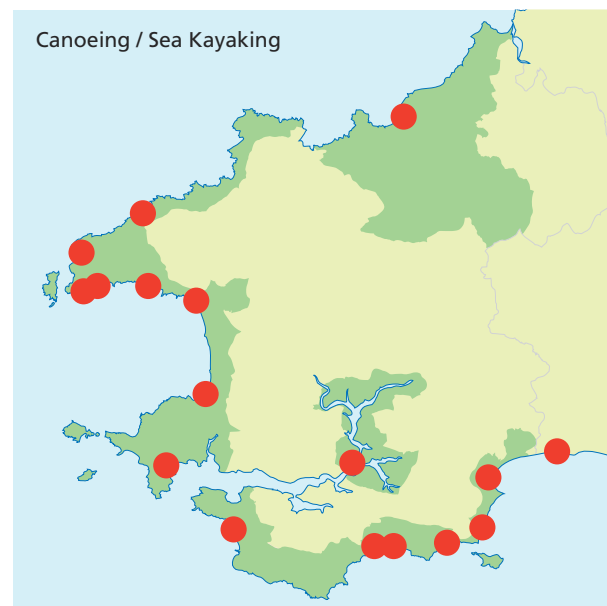
Beach Activities are extremely popular and take place on most sandy beaches in the county. There are at least 55 beaches around Pembrokeshire with a range of types and nearly all have reliably good water quality. A regularly identified attraction of Pembrokeshire is the lack of overcrowding at most beaches. Those beaches close to urban centres tend to be used by a higher proportion of local residents. The most popular beaches are those at Poppit Sands, Whitesands Bay, Newgale, Freshwater East, Manorbier and Tenby to Amroth. Beach activities are usually organised independently at short notice and are seasonal from Spring to Autumn peaking in Summer.



The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities

## Canoeing / Sea Kayaking

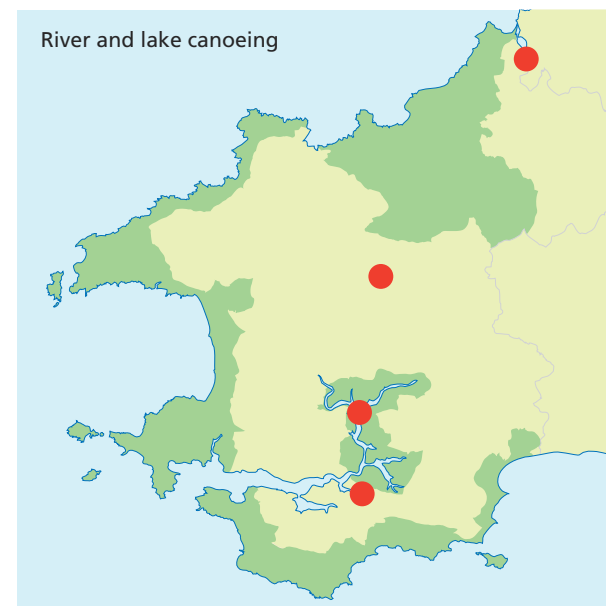
Canoeing occurs across the county at a range of ability levels, from beginners in small managed groups to more independent experienced paddlers. It is a popular activity with young people. There are numerous sea kayaking trips to observe wildlife, while surf kayaking occurs at beaches such as Whitesands and Newgale. While there are a number of suitable access opportunities, the sites which see the most use is where there is easy parking, access, non-challenging conditions and often where suitable outdoor centres can provide facilities. Canoeing mainly occurs between Spring and Autumn peaking in Summer, but certain locations see year-round activity, such as Solva and Stackpole.



## River and lake Canoeing

The Daugleddau Estuary, the Nevern estuary and the Teifi estuary are navigable as far as the tidal limit and are popular for both kayaking and Canadian canoeing. Both the Cleddau and Teifi are used by commercial activity providers as well as by individuals and family groups. No rivers in Pembrokeshire have rights of navigation above tidal limits but unlicensed canoeing takes place sporadically on the Gwaun, Nevern, Eastern and Western Cleddau. This causes some conflict with anglers and landowners although much of the use is at times of spate when other users are perhaps less active. The current government advice is that on-water access should be achieved through negotiated agreements but complex landownership makes this unrealistic in Pembrokeshire and with the proximity of the sea and estuaries, river canoe use is never likely to be a high priority issue for canoeists in Pembrokeshire.

Canoe use is possible at Llys y Fran on the reservoir managed as a country park by Dŵr Cymru - Welsh Water and on the Castle Pond in Pembroke.



## Climbing

Organised climbing accounts for around 7,000 climber days per year in Pembrokeshire, with between 100-150 local climbers. The most popular location is around Stackpole and the Castlemartin Range, as well as the stretches of coast between Strumble Head and St David's Head, and around Lydstep/Giltar Point. Access to climbs in Range West has improved in recent years.

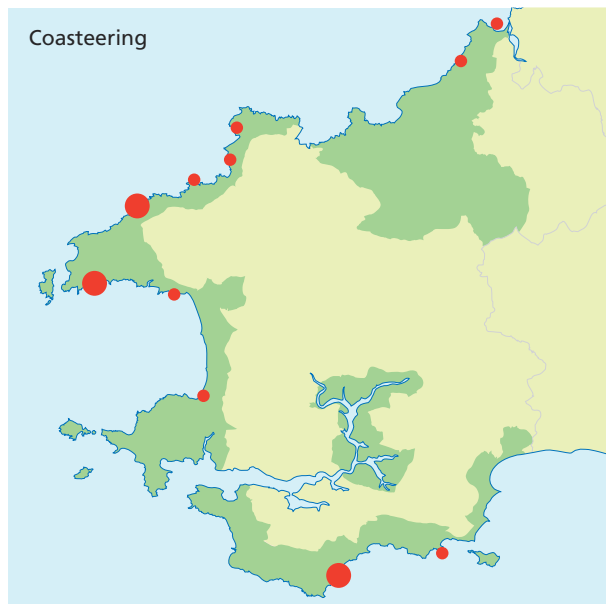
Most climbing takes place in small groups, or in larger groups with activity centres. Soloing/free climbing over water is also growing in popularity. Climbing has an excellent club structure, which shows responsibility towards the conservation of climbing sites, and there are well-respected temporary and permanent restrictions relating to breeding and nesting sites. Climbing is a year-round activity, although most popular between Spring and Autumn, and there is some demand for better indoor climbing facilities for winter and bad weather practice, as well as as beginners' tuition.



The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities

## Coasteering

Pembrokeshire is a leading location for the recent development of coasteering, with the activity carried out daily during the season with almost 200 participants at the most popular sites. These include the St David's Peninsula, the Stackpole/Castlemartin area and Lydstep. Capacity is limited due to suitable locations particularly in large swell conditions. There is a perception that coasteering, particularly by independent users, can cause localised erosion, disturbance to wildlife and habitats, and conflict with other activities (especially climbing and angling). Overcrowding in peak season occurs in popular routes, especially at Aberreiddi and Stackpole. There is a need for coasteerers to follow the model of climbing in developing responsible strategies and minimising impacts.



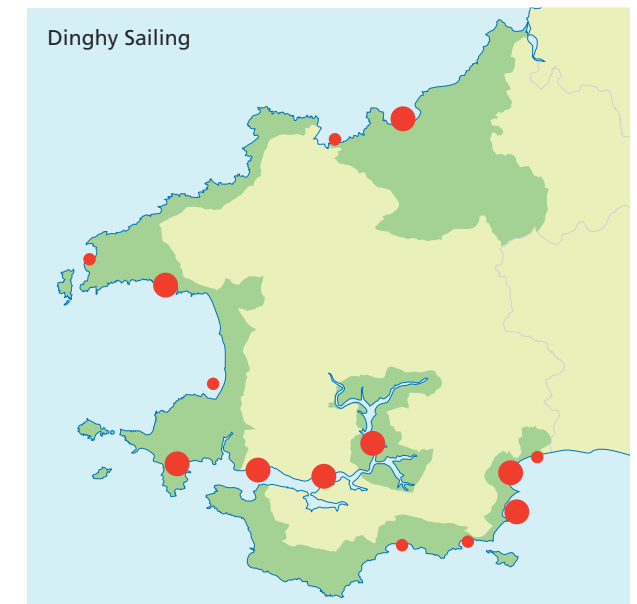
## Cycling

Cycling is currently widespread but low key, and restricted to a network of cycle paths (the Celtic Trail and National Cycle Network) and on minor roads. There are occasional organised groups, often where there is cycle hire provision, and circular cycle routes are advertised around Newport and Saundersfoot. Their impact is low and their use is encouraged, especially in quiet lanes. Mountain biking is also low-key and with some use of woodland areas, the Preseli Hills and the bridleway network in a few locations. Cycling events, especially for charity are increasingly popular and triathlons and related events occur regularly. There are few opportunities for coastal off-road cycling and there may be scope to develop new routes with landowner agreement. The International Iron Man Competition in Tenby in 2011 may well give heightened prominence to cycling in the county.



## Dinghy Sailing

Dinghy sailing is widespread throughout the county, though concentrated around slipways and clubs, such as on the Daugleddau Estuary, around Milford Haven and Dale and on the south east coast. They are used for those learning sailing but also for a wide range of events and competitions, and generate day trips and longer visits into the area for dinghy sailing. Peak demand is in summer, as with other watersports, but there are regular events which can cause localised and temporary congestion issues. Local community regattas can provide a highlight of the year for both visitors and local enthusiasts.



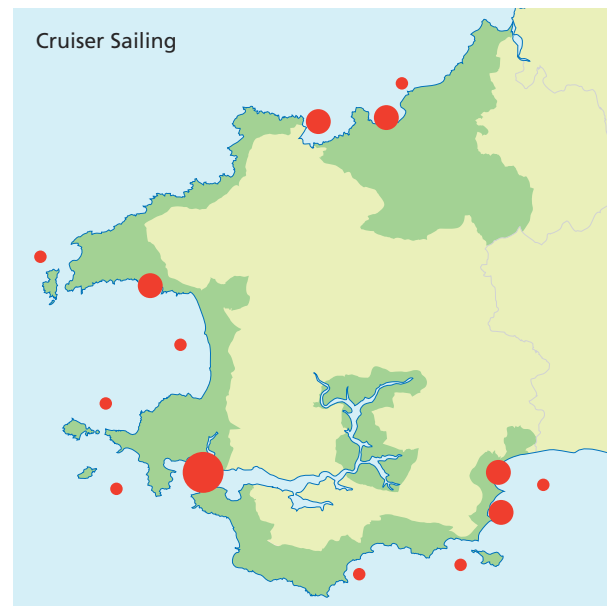
The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities



## Cruiser Sailing

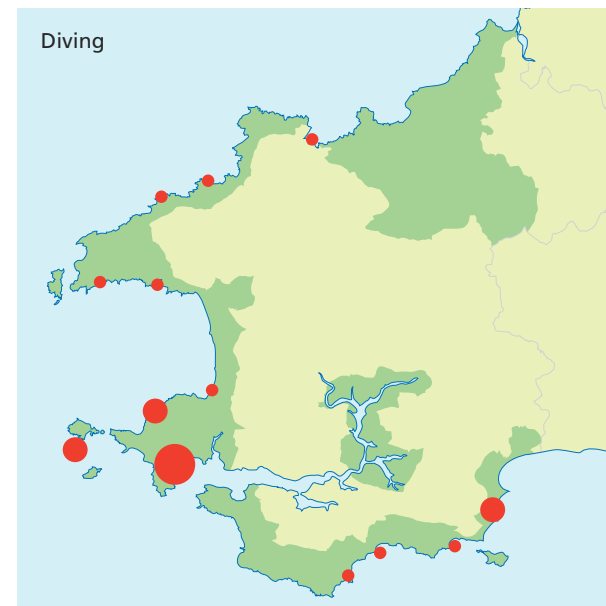
Sailing and motor boating around the coastal and inshore waters of the National Park is a wonderful way to explore this world-famous and protected coastline. Boating is centred on the Milford Haven Waterway or Daugleddau with marinas, sheltered water and a network of yacht clubs, pubs and tranquil anchorages to explore.

Many rarely sail beyond St Ann's Head into the open sea, but for those that do, Pembrokeshire's islands and picturesque harbours like Solva, Fishguard and Tenby offer a fantastic cruising ground. Sailing schools and yacht charters both operate from the Milford Haven with cruising guides for the area available. A new marina at Fishguard may change the situation.



## Diving

Pembrokeshire has some of the best diving sites in Europe, both for wildlife and shipwrecks, with both shallow and deep water diving. The most popular sites for diving are around the islands, such as in Skomer Marine Nature Reserve, as well as around Milford Haven, St Brides Haven, Porthgain and Dale. The Pembrokeshire Marine Code and the Skomer Marine Nature Reserve agreements seek to manage activities and reduce disturbance. Most diving is organised through clubs or dive charter companies, and demand is highest in Spring and Summer for diving round the Islands, with coastal diving less frequent between Spring and Autumn.



## Geocaching

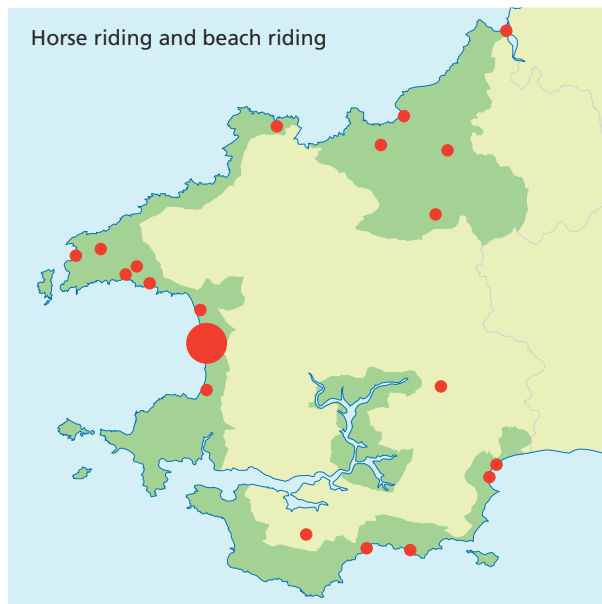
(pronounced geo-cashing) is a worldwide treasure hunting game that has been modernised by the use of GPS devices rather than just the traditional map. The idea is to find containers that have been hidden outdoors (geocaches) by looking up their co-ordinates on the internet, pinpointing their location using a GPS unit, and then sharing the locations and your experiences online. Geocaching is an increasingly popular past-time and is enjoyed by people of all ages, as it is a fantastic way to enjoy the outdoors and visit new places. There are over 100 geocaches in Pembrokeshire. However it is very important that participants ensure that they have landowners' permission either to be searching for or to 'hide' new caches. There have even been incidents of people hiding caches on the MOD ranges. There is a related activity called waymarking which involves using GPS to find natural features. This is an activity that we would prefer to see promoted because it does not involve leaving man made items on site.



The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities

### Horse riding and beach riding

Horse riding takes place throughout the county, mainly using private land, bridleways and lanes. There are hotspots on the beaches and paths at Druidston Haven and Nolton Haven, where stables offer beach riding experience. This has potential conflicts with other beach users in high season, as up to 70 horses use the beach at a time, but less so in off-season. In general, horse riding occurs all year, both through riding schools and independent riders. Away from the beach, there is capacity on the bridleway network but this is limited because the network is patchy and routes do not join up. Maintaining a good surface for both walkers and riders on well-used bridleways is often difficult especially in wet areas. Although a fairly small percentage of visitors mentioned horse riding in the visitor survey 2007 (1% main activity/4% in all activities) the passport scheme shows over 10,000 horses registered in the county showing the local importance of riding. The development of the Pembrokeshire Trail by the County Council now gives new opportunities for an extended ride in the county.



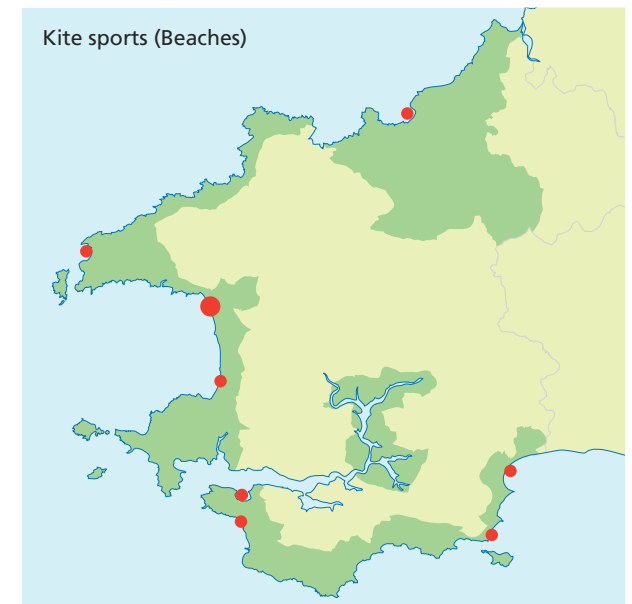
### Personal Water Craft (PWC)/Jet skiing

PWC use is widespread but infrequent around the county, but focused around launching sites in the South and travelling around the coast or islands. Most slips are unregulated, although Lydstep slipway is controlled by Bourne Leisure who own the site and have strict usage controls, such as evidence of insurance and commitment to a code of conduct. The greatest intensity of use is from Lydstep and Freshwater East on the South Coast, travelling in between the two or to Caldey and St Margaret's Islands, and (increasingly) the Daugleddau Estuary. There is sporadic use by small numbers at most locations around the National Park. Most trips are by single vessels or small groups, and have potential to cause disturbance to wildlife and other users. Demand is highly seasonal from these locations.



### Kite sports on beaches

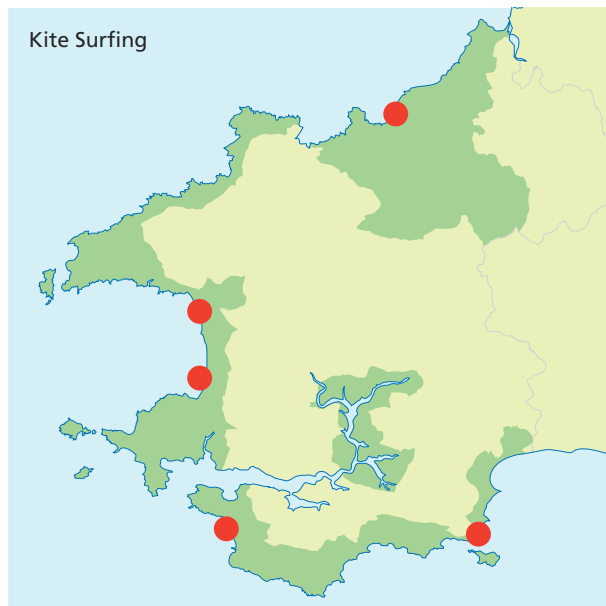
Kite flying, both by families and more serious kite-flying occurs on many of the beaches in the National Park, especially around St Brides Bay. It is most popular between Spring and Autumn, subject to wind conditions, and occurs individually or with families at Freshwater East and Lydstep Haven. The PCC and PCNPA have agreed a code of practice for use of power kites on beaches. There is also an annual kite-flying festival, the Pembrokeshire Sky Festival, at Carew. Kite boarding and kite bugging takes place on larger beaches but should only be encouraged out of season for safety reasons.



The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities

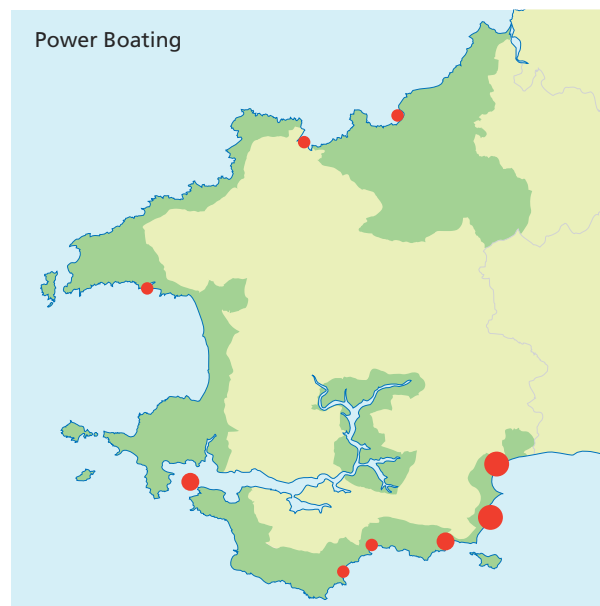
### Kite surfing

Kite surfing occurs in low numbers in five main sites around the National Park: Newport Sands, Broad Haven North, Newgale Sands (where there is organised tuition) Freshwater West and Tenby South Beach. It occurs mainly around the summer and shoulder seasons and has the potential to provide active recreation on days where other beach activities are limited by wind. It has the potential to conflict with other beach users during peak periods, and should be undertaken with consideration. The same beaches are often also used by land yachting when windy; this activity, like kite buggying above, should only be an out-of-season activity on beaches.



### Power boating and large power craft

Power boating occurs around the coast associated with moorings, marinas and slipways, and craft make short circular trips around the coast or islands. They are most popular around the South Coast (as with PWC) but also around all the islands, St Brides Bay and Milford Haven/Daugleddau Estuary. They occur primarily in summer months through independent users and small groups, and often through clubs or in association with diving. A new marina at Fishguard may change the distribution.



### Quad Biking and other motorised land activities

Motorised activities such as quad biking and scrambling have very few legitimate opportunities on public land and rights of way in Pembrokeshire. There are a small number of rights of way where vehicle rights remain but most legitimate use is on private land in one off events or in quad bike centres operating with planning consent. There is an annual hill climb at Llys y Fran and grass track racing at Talbenny and Jameston. There is some unlawful recreational use on the Preseli Hills, Dinas Mountain and on some dune systems. This has potential to cause vegetation damage and to impact on others' enjoyment and will be actively discouraged.

The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities

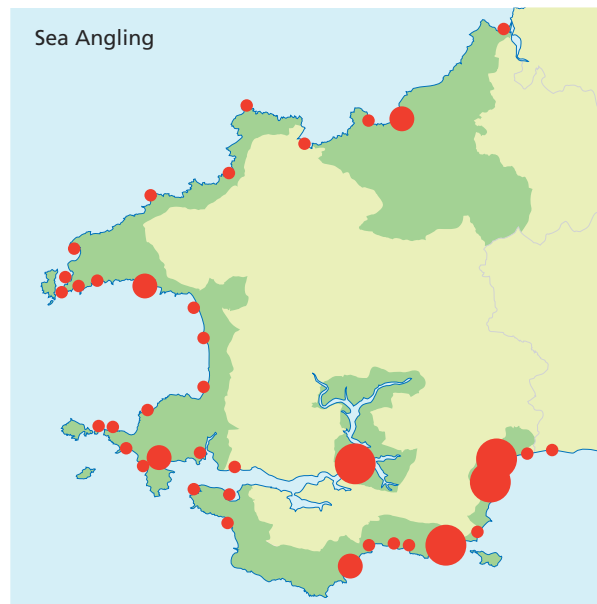
## Rowing

Rowing occurs throughout the county, linked to community clubs. Most rowers are local residents in the 30-50 age group, who practice regularly for events and competitions. There are an estimated 12,000 rowing person days per year, mainly using associated yachting/sailing club facilities. The most popular areas are at Abercastle, Little Haven and Solva, despite limited facilities and access (showers, changing rooms and so on), with better facilities at Milford Haven and Daugleddau. Rowing is most popular in Summer but occurs between Spring and Autumn or according to the race calendar.



## Sea Angling

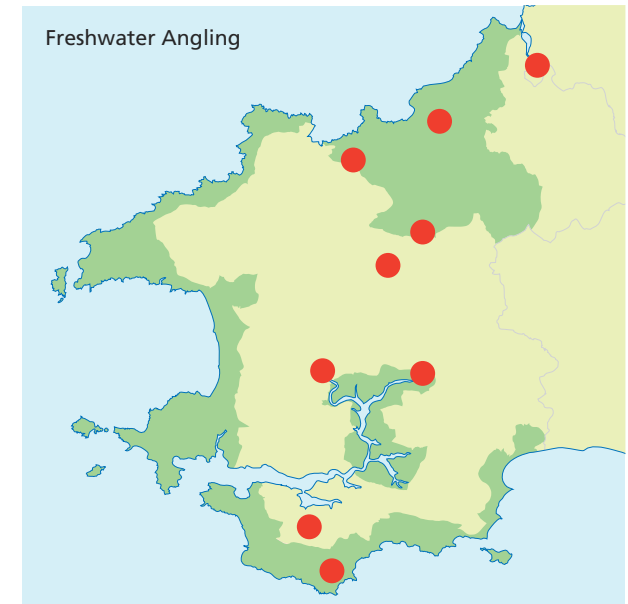
Sea angling, from cliffs, beaches, pontoons, jetties and boats, is a popular year-round activity throughout the National Park and around Skomer and Skokholm. Much of it is done by resident anglers at short notice, predominantly male, or by day and longer stay visitors. Most angling is done by individuals or in small groups, although competitions attract up to 200 anglers. Angling of all kinds is economically important to the area, and boat angling provides revenue for charter boat operators, but there are issues with litter, lost tackle, conflicts with divers, coasteerers and other users and disturbance to wildlife.



## Freshwater Angling

The rivers in and around the Preseli Hills offer anglers varying locations to fish for salmon and sea trout that run the rivers Nevern, Western and Eastern Cleddau and the Tâf, in season. Each of these rivers, especially in their upper reaches, is also the home of wild brown trout. For the stillwater game enthusiast there is some boat or bank fishing on reservoirs and an array of small water fisheries. There is also fishing provided by the National Trust at Bosherton Lilly Ponds. The Environment Agency is responsible for maintaining, improving and developing inland fisheries in England and Wales.

To fish in Pembrokeshire's lakes, ponds or rivers you must hold a valid national rod licence and adhere to the by-laws for the particular fishery and fish species concerned. The NPA and PCC publish an angling guide to the county.



The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities

## Paragliding

Paragliding mainly takes place in the Preseli hills with some activity above Newgale. The gradual gradient of the Preseli Hills and the wind conditions often provide favourable learning conditions. The sport has been increasing over the last few years with at least one local based school providing training courses. Initial training is often carried out on the beach with beach landings occurring infrequently at Newgale. There is some concern about impact on grazing stock in the Preseli Hills. The NPA and Outdoor Charter Group are working to establish agreements.

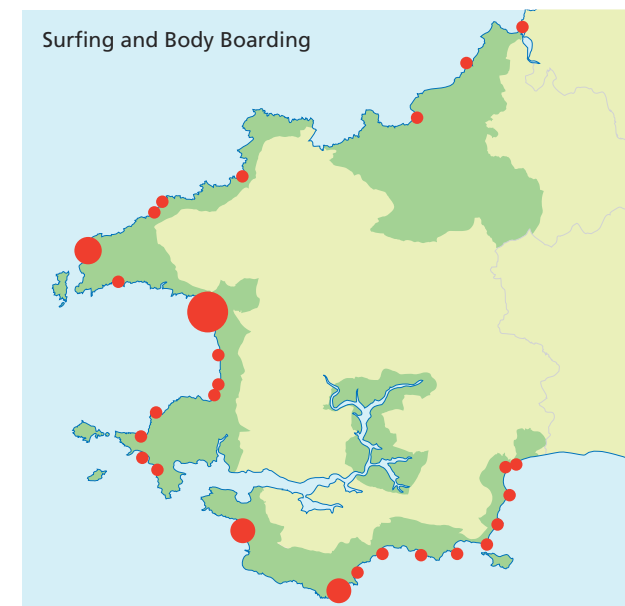
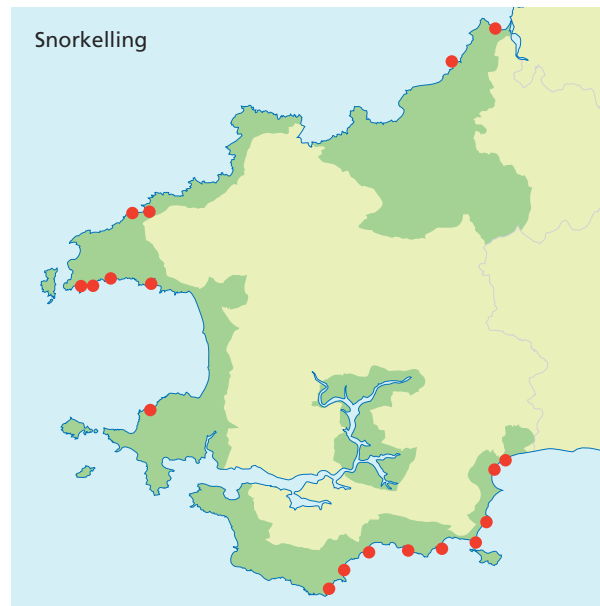
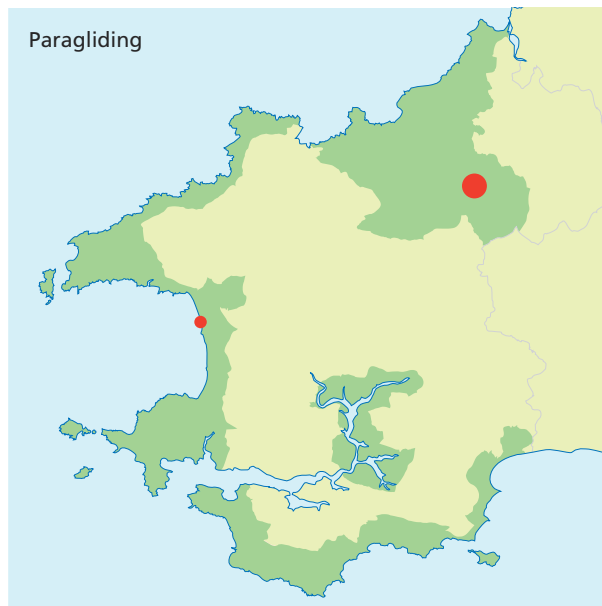
## Snorkelling

Snorkelling is limited to particular sites by location and season, and is predominantly low use, but with the potential to develop. The best sites have shallow waters and good marine life, such as around Abereididi, Caerfai (near St Davids) and St Brides although snorkelling also occurs around the South coast to Tenby more infrequently. Activity occurs predominantly in summer months by individuals and families.

## Surfing and Body Boarding

Pembrokeshire is Wales's leading surfing destination, and one of the leading destinations for surfing in the UK, with a number of excellent beaches for surfing. The county is almost unique for having beaches facing all directions, so can cater for a range of wind and swell conditions. The demand for surfing is dependent on weather and aspect, with conditions generally best in Autumn and Winter. However, the summer peak creates congestion in some locations.

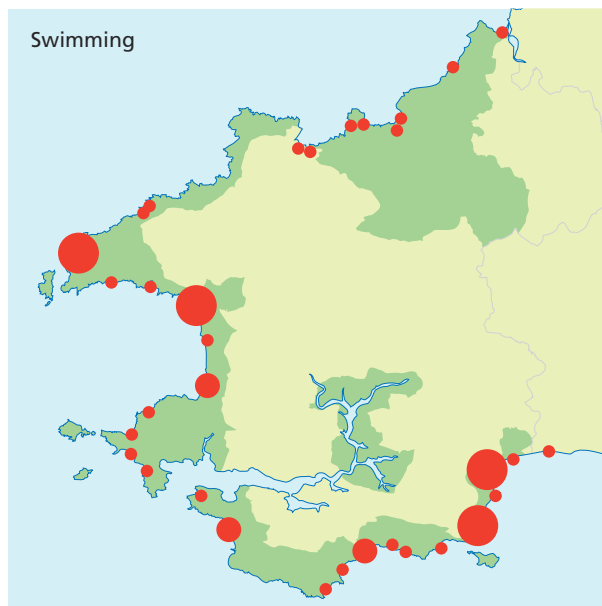
The beaches around St Bride's Bay and Freshwater West attract surfers on a year-round basis, in total around 12,000 surfer days each year, by 350-500 local surfers and 100-300 regular visitors, mainly from South and Mid-Wales. The surfing market for visitors outside these areas must also compete with Cornwall and Devon. Surfers are usually younger in age and independent users, although beginners are catered for by surf hire and tuition in some locations, supported by surf schools and outdoor centres. Some locations, such as Whitesands Bay, are also popular with wave skiing, which takes around 500-700 user days each year, mainly by visitors, and body boarding. There has also been a noted increase in the numbers of Stand Up Paddle boarding in the area over the last few years.



The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities

## Swimming

Swimming occurs throughout the county during summer months, although there are also Christmas events. The highest levels occur unsurprisingly at beaches, from Newport and Poppit Sands, Broad Haven and Newgale Sands, Freshwater East and round to Tenby South. Users are individuals and families. The water quality and beach cleanliness are generally very good around the coastline, supported by the Green Seas Partnership to safeguard and enhance the Welsh coastal environment. There are major winter swimming events usually for charity and a number of surf lifesaving and triathlon clubs but no sea swimming clubs. Swimming competitions are a feature of several local regattas and on a larger scale, the Iron Man Competition in Tenby in 2011 will see over 1200 international competitors take part in a sea swim as part of the event.



## Waterskiing

Water-skiing occurs at many beaches and in the Milford Haven Waterway and Daugleddau, with generally low levels of use but occasionally locally high levels, especially at Burton, which is zoned for water skiing as part of the Milford Haven Recreation Plan. They are best suited close to sheltered waters, and can have potential impacts on other users, especially in non-designated areas. The most popular coastal locations for waterskiing are Tenby and Lydstep Haven (similar to other motorised boat use).



## Wildlife Boat Trips

Pembrokeshire has some of the most outstanding biodiversity hotspots in Europe both above and below the water, which are used as breeding and nesting sites by several species of marine mammals and birds. Wildlife sightseeing occurs from a range of locations, especially around the islands and surrounding waters using a range of vessels. Operators are well-organised and generally abide by the Pembrokeshire Marine Code though there are reports of code breakage. The trips provide significant educational and economic benefits to local communities.

There is a range of wildlife across the seasons that merit trips, and the season runs from bird breeding and plant flowering in spring to seal pupping in autumn. Use of small harbours near the islands is consequently high, such as St Justinians for Ramsey, which can lead to congestion at peak times. The Daugleddau Estuary is popular for its low-energy environment. Most of the marine area is protected by national and international conservation legislation, including the Skomer Marine Nature Reserve and Pembrokeshire Marine Special Area of Conservation.



The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities

## Windsurfing

Windsurfing occurs throughout the coast of the National Park, subject to suitable conditions, with around 3,300 windsurfing days per year. The most popular sites are used mainly from spring to autumn in the West, such as around Dale and Newgale Sands, with summer bringing users to beaches in the South. It is estimated that there are around 50-60 windsurfers active in good conditions in summer months, with 10-15 hardy souls in winter.



## Dog Walking

Dog Walking occurs frequently across the National Park and Coast Path, mostly by local residents on frequent short trips throughout the year. It tends to be focussed close to areas with car parks, on beaches or near villages. There is a public perception of dog fouling and behavioural problems at several sites, especially beaches, indeed dog management issues are seen as a major concern to many landowners, communities and other recreational users. Enforcement is very difficult for such a widespread activity and education and responsible dog ownership must be the way forward. Seasonal restrictions on dog use are in place on most Blue Flag beaches.



## Walking

Walking is consistently the most popular activity in the National Park, as recorded by visitor surveys. Between 70% and 88% of visitors to the National Park go on either a short or long walk at some point during their stay, according to the 2008 Pembrokeshire Visitor Survey.

There is a large selection of walks, many circular and many of which link to the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, the most well-used of the 3 National Trails in Wales with over 900,000 user days per year. 100,000 of these user days are by long-distance walkers (10,590 walkers) and 800,000 by short distance users (around 276,000 walkers). There is also the 806km network of inland rights of way, and in general the majority of the network has capacity for future increases in walking.

Walking can range from casual short walks by day visitors and tourists to long day and multi-day walks on the Coast Path by staying visitors. Walkers of the Coast Path in particular are more likely to fall into the 35-59 age group, who live more than 100 miles from the National Trail, who are in full-time employment or recently retired. Those on shorter and circular trips are likely to be slightly younger and live closer to the Trail itself (often within 10 miles).

Walking is a year-round activity in Pembrokeshire, as there is such a range of coastal and inland scenery, which changes across the seasons. Walking is also one of the best ways to appreciate the special qualities of the National Park and the only way to access certain special locations (such as Barafundle Bay). Some of the most popular sections of the National Trail are the in the South between Tenby and Stackpole and around St Davids and Strumble Heads, especially around small villages with car parking facilities or where the Greenways bus service stops.

The dots on the maps are relative solely for each activity and should not be compared across activities

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