

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2006-2021)

# **Leisure and Recreation Topic Paper**

April 2008



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## BACKGROUND

In January 2007 the Council issued for public consultation the Local Development Plan: Preferred Strategy. The Strategy was the first stage of the new statutory local development plan (LDP).

The next stage in the plan making process is the production of a deposit draft LDP. In order to ensure the soundness of the emerging LDP and transparency in the plan making process, the Council has produced a series of topic papers.

The topic papers address the main area of policy to be considered in the LDP. **It should be stressed that these papers are a starting point for policy development, through the sustainability appraisal process and as the Council's evidence base develops, emerging LDP policy will evolve and be refined.**

### 1. INTRODUCTION

What we do during our leisure and recreational pastimes contribute to our quality of life. This topic paper aims to set out how the Local Development Plan can support and promote the development of leisure and recreation.

One of the main functions of this paper is to show how we propose to develop, manage and provide for the wide range of facilities that allow for pursuits which encourage physical activity – and the well documented, associated, physical wellbeing. The paper will also consider the provision of facilities for all other, non-physical, recreational and leisure pursuits, to meet the needs of all members of society.

By encouraging healthier lifestyles, Rhondda Cynon Taf hopes to improve the health and well being of people in the authority, including the elderly, disabled people, and children and young people. It aims to address health inequalities by encouraging people to adopt healthier lifestyles and ensuring good access to local services. The natural and built environment of Wales is a valuable resource for sport and recreational activities and needs to be managed in an effective way to ensure that it can be used sustainably.

Public open space plays an important role in enabling informal and formal leisure, recreation and exercise, ranging from a casual walk to an organised football match. Different sizes and locations of space are needed according to the function that they perform. Also, natural greenspace has been concluded in numerous studies, to clearly support the mental wellbeing of those who can access it.

In order to do this, the topic paper will outline:

- **The policy context** for Leisure and Recreation, including an explanation of national, regional and local policy;
- **Key issues in Rhondda Cynon Taf**, which relate specifically to Leisure and Recreation;
- **Preferred Strategy** policy in respect of Leisure and Recreation, representations to the Strategy and proposed policy response; and,
- **Draft LDP Policy** which provides a policy context for Leisure and Recreation.

## **2. NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT**

### **People, Places, Futures – The Wales Spatial Plan (2004)**

The Wales Spatial Plan provides a framework for the future spatial development of Wales. Rhondda Cynon Taf, along with the neighbouring authorities of Cardiff, Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly and the Vale of Glamorgan has been identified as part of the South East – Capital Network Zone. The vision for the Capital Network is:

“An innovative skilled area offering a high quality of life – international yet distinctively Welsh. It will compete internationally by increasing its global visibility through stronger links between the Valleys and the coast and the UK and Europe, helping spread prosperity within the area and benefiting other parts of Wales”.

Whilst the Spatial Plan may not provide a detailed framework for future planning of Leisure and Recreation in South East Wales, it does relate the subject to the broader context of the future viability of the region, through the following;

- Prioritise for investment in community facilities and the re-use of underused facilities for community purposes.
- Support the work of Groundwork, the Design Commission for Wales, and other organisations to help tackle degraded urban environments and to improve the quality of public space.

- The Tourism and Leisure sector has been identified as having potential to contribute to a much greater extent to the area’s economy

### **Turning Heads – A Strategy for the Heads of the Valley 2020 (June 2006).**

Turning Heads – A Strategy for the heads of the Valleys 2020 as the name suggests, outlines a strategy for regenerating the Northern Valley areas of South East Wales. In Rhondda Cynon Taf the strategy includes Treorchy, Treherbert, Ferndale, Mountain Ash and Aberdare. The objectives of the programme reflect those of the Wales Spatial Plan in seeking to ensure:

- An attractive and well used natural, historic and built environment;
- A vibrant economic landscape offering new opportunities;
- A well educated, skilled and healthier population;
- An appealing and coherent tourism and leisure experience, and
- Public confidence in a shared bright future.

The Strategy identifies the accessible countryside and rich historic environment as an opportunity to capitalise upon.

Strategic Programme (SP) 3: Well-Used and Easily Accessed Amenities, sets out the objective of targeting inward investment towards improving the quality and maintenance of public spaces and amenities, including recycling facilities. This will include cleaner river corridors, and accessible and

pleasant paths and cycle routes. Consideration will be given to finding new uses for the vast network of underused tramways, canal paths and old railway lines.

SP7: Improving Health Through Prevention, also sets out the aim to invest in leisure facilities and access to the countryside and capitalising on this through encouraging people to participate in physical activity in order to improve health.

SP9: Linked Local and Regional Attractions and Facilities, is a programme to develop linked and integrated local regional attractions and facilities – which although aimed at creating a stronger tourism industry in the area, it will also provide for local residents.

### **Planning Policy Wales, March 2003 and Planning Policy Wales Companion Guide June 2006.**

Assembly Government Leisure and Recreation policy is embodied in Planning Policy Wales. Supplementary guidance in relation to this is contained in Planning Guidance (Wales), Technical Advice Note (Wales) 16 (Sport and Recreation), March 1998, Consultation on Draft Revised Technical Advice Note 16 (Sport, Recreation and Open Space) July 2006 and Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement; 01/2006 (Housing). The Planning Policy Wales Companion Guide (2006) relates the guidance to the LDP system, identifying clear statements of national policy that should only be repeated where local circumstances require.

PPW states that *Sport and Recreation contribute to our quality of life. The Assembly Government supports the development of sport and recreation and the wide range of leisure pursuits which encourage physical activity. They are important for the well being of children and adults and for the social and economic life of Wales. The Assembly Government's main planning objectives for Leisure and Recreation are as follows;*

- *A more sustainable pattern of development by creating and maintaining networks of facilities and open spaces in places well served by sustainable means of travel, in particular within urban areas;*
- *Social inclusion, improved health and well-being by ensuring that everyone, including the elderly and those with disabilities, has easy access to good quality, well designed facilities and open space; and*
- *The provision of innovative, user-friendly, accessible facilities to make our urban areas, particularly town centres, more attractive places, where people will choose to live, to work and to visit.*

### **Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement; 01/2006 (Housing)**

Policies which seek to make maximum use of vacant urban land for housing will need to distinguish between sites which need to be retained for recreation, amenity or nature conservation purposes, and areas which are genuinely suitable for housing development.

Where substantial new housing is to be permitted, plans should include policies to make clear that developers will be expected to provide open space which is reasonably related in scale and location to the development.

### **Technical Advice Note (Wales) 16 – Sport and Recreation (1998)**

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 16, provides advice on sport, leisure and recreational issues.

The TAN provides detailed guidance on the more complex issues attached to sports and recreational activities that need to be taken into consideration when policies are formulated or permission granted. These include issues such as noise, light and traffic generation.

### **Consultation Draft Revised Technical Advice Note 16 ‘Sport, Recreation and Open Space’ July (2006)**

Consultation Draft TAN 16 provides more up to date guidance on sport, recreation and open space and gives a clear indication of current WAG thinking on the matter.

This outlines the need for clear, effective and well implemented planning policies for sport, recreation and open space, as they contribute to economic development, community regeneration and social inclusion. They may also contribute to the conservation of Wales' natural assets and to the health, well-being and quality of life of individuals and communities.

### **Climbing Higher – Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity (2005) –**

The document sets out the long-term strategy for sport and physical activity in Wales for the next twenty years. The purpose of the strategy is to achieve:

- *An active, healthy and inclusive Wales, where sport, physical activity and active recreation provide a common platform for participation, fun and achievement, which binds communities and the nation and where the outstanding environment of Wales is used sustainably to enhance confidence in ourselves and our place in the world.*

*Climbing Higher* has spatial land use planning implications that need to be taken into account at the national and local level. The strategy includes targets which should guide the development of planning policy and the setting of standards within local authorities, in particular that by 2025:

### **ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY FOR WALES 2006**

The strategy outlines how we must deliver high quality places for people to live. This means a high quality built environment and opportunities to access green space areas for recreation and biodiversity, where environmental nuisances are minimised.

The strategy will focus on ensuring that the land use planning system maximises economic, social and environmental benefits when considering developments and encourages the retention or provision of green spaces in urban areas.



It also aims to increase the number of people walking and cycling, and using the natural environment for physical activity and enjoyment. This will provide health, well being and economic benefits, as well as encouraging people to value their environment.

### **3. LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT**

#### **A Better Life – Our Community Plan 2001 – 2014**

A Better Life – Our Community Plan sets out a framework for creating a brighter future for everyone who lives and works in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The plan was developed through the Better Life Consortium, during 2003/2004. The community Plan identifies 5 key themes under which are a series of local level aims. The key themes are:

- Safer Communities
- Our Living Space
- Our Health and Well Being
- Boosting Our Local Economy
- Learning for Growth

The key themes identified in the Community Plan have been developed into strategies for improving the quality of life in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Leisure and Recreation issues are considered as part of 'Our Living Space, an environmental improvement strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf'.

The strategy sets out its aspiration that Rhondda Cynon Taf will be a community where everyone who lives, works in or

visits the area will enjoy the benefits of a better quality of life, achieving their potential, while helping to develop and protect the area for the benefit of others

The goals for 'Our Living Space' are;

- *To protect and improve our local environment, which we value because of the growing quality of its biodiversity, natural beauty, heritage, parks and open spaces, streetscape and architecture*
- *To make Rhondda Cynon Taf a place where people want to live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, because of the high quality of life it offers*

The Strategy sets out the following themes.

- Biodiversity and Rivers
- Waste
- A cleaner, safer environment
- Local environments
- The built environment
- Transport
- Energy, resource use and climate change
- Education and awareness raising

Of particular relevance to this topic paper area are the following theme objectives;

*Local Environments –*

To improve the quality and attractiveness of our green spaces;

To increase the safe reuse and appropriate development of former industrial or currently underused land.

*Transport -*

To successfully develop an integrated accessible transport network so that more people are empowered to live their lives unhindered, and travel in healthy, non-polluting ways. The Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy

The strategy identifies that the physical environment can have both positive and negative impacts on the health of communities. Good urban design can encourage people to engage in social and physical activities in public spaces close to where they live and work, and can minimise noise, stress and the fear of crime.

Physical and mental health are both improved by access to nature and the countryside. Access to these is fundamental, to appreciate local landscapes and to support wildlife conservation, as well as to provide a setting for physical activity.

Children and Young Peoples Plan

The Play, Sport, Leisure and Culture section of the plan outlines the vision that all children and young people should be able to have fun, enjoy their childhood and youth and to

pursue learning and life skills through having access to, and opportunities to participate in high quality, safe and wide ranging play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities which celebrate diversity of interest and needs.

**Out and About – The Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf (2007)**

The Plan outlines the Vision statement for countryside access in Rhondda Cynon Taf;

*‘To manage, develop and promote the network of local public rights of way and other countryside access in order to satisfy present and likely future demand for the enjoyment of the countryside, open-air recreation, exercise and ‘access for all’.*

The plan has identified 6 clear objectives;

- 1, Promote outdoor countryside activity for health, regeneration, tourism and recreation;
- 2, Promote walking and cycling as transport options;
- 3, Protect the access resource (including PROW, highways, access land and Council facilities);
- 4, Improve provision for walkers, cyclists, horse riders, off road vehicles and users with disabilities;
- 5, Involve local community and voluntary organisations in the development, promotion and use of access opportunities

6, Develop a more efficient office management system for statutory Rights of Way work including the Definitive Map

### **Rhondda Cynon Taf Openspace Assessment (2007)**

Rhondda Cynon Taf commissioned a study to ascertain the current standard of open space provision across the county borough. The study emanated from national guidance to undertake openspace assessments and from the Countryside Council for Wales' (CCW) Natural Greenspaces standards .

The company exeGesIS was commissioned to undertake the work, in accordance with expertise and input from several sections of the Council. There were three major parts to the study;

#### 1. Greenspaces;

It was necessary to ascertain the standard of Greenspace in the County Borough. 'Greenspaces' are publicly accessible, open spaces that have a 'predominantly natural' character. The 'Greenspace Toolkit', launched by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) in May 2006 outlines the benefits of these areas. It also sets out the standards such as how an increasing scale of such spaces should be accessible from an increasing scale of distance from where people live.

The study was able to allocate a pass or fail to every physical census data area in Rhondda Cynon Taf on each of the 5 Greenspace standards.

#### 2. Open space;

An assessment of the provision of other types of public opens space that fall outside the definition of 'Greenspaces' was undertaken. This work was to look at the provision of accessible open space of all types over 0.4 hectares against the scale of distances to these areas from all parts of the County Borough. The task of analysis was to measure the distance between each postcode and the nearest access point or the nearest open space. The outcome was that all parts of the County Borough have been digitally delineated according to its distance to Open Space.

#### 3. Play/Sports areas

There was also an analysis into the provision of accessible play and sport areas under 0.4 hectares, again considering the distances and accessibility to them from where people live.

Further details of the processes and outcomes can be seen in the Greenspace Provision Report (2007) and the Open Space and Play/Sport Area Provision Report (2007).

### **4. KEY ISSUES IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

The key issues to be addressed by the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP have been identified by making an assessment of the following:

- The results of pre-deposit consultation with key stakeholders;

- The results of the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Exercise ;
- A review of baseline social, economic environmental information, and;

The issues identified through this process will inform directly the development of the spatial strategy for the LDP.

### **Pre Deposit Consultation**

The Visioning event unveiled a number of issues associated with Leisure and Recreation;

- Need to address the Rights of way in the County Borough;
- Protection of the environment;
- The potential for RCT as a destination for tourists, walkers, climbers and cyclists should be recognised and efforts to make connections with national routes;

### **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).**

The SA/SEA identified the following issues that are outlined in the SA scoping report:

- Protecting and enhancing the quality of the environment, local distinctiveness, cultural and historical heritage;

## **5. PREFERRED STRATEGY (JANUARY 2007)**

The Preferred Strategy provides the following policy framework for the development of Leisure and Recreational facilities in Rhondda Cynon Taf

### ***Objectives of the Local Development Plan.***

Paragraph 4.2 of the Preferred Strategy lists 16 objectives for the LDP. The following are the most relevant to the topic area;

- Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all;
- Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well being;
- Improve, protect and enhance the landscape and countryside;
- Improve, protect and enhance the water environment.

### ***Development Strategy***

Paragraphs 6.1 – 6.11 of the Preferred Strategy sets out a development strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Strategy recognises the important role that principal towns and key settlements play in providing services of both local and county importance. Where possible, development will be focused on the principal towns and key settlements of the County Borough in order to support and reinforce the important role these centres play as places for social and economic activity.

### **Strategic Policy**

The Strategic Leisure and Recreation policy is as follows;

#### **SP 12 - Community Infrastructure**

The impact of developments on local community infrastructure will need to be addressed by appropriate on site provision or contributions to off site improvements. Planning obligations will be sought to secure the necessary physical, social, economic and environmental infrastructure related to the development. Such requirements may include:

- b) Open space, play and youth facilities;
- e) Environmental works including benefits to the natural and historic environment;
- g) Investment in community and indoor leisure

#### **Representations made to the Preferred Strategy**

Representations made in respect of the Leisure and Recreation element of the Preferred Strategy fall consist of general representations on the document and representations on SP 12 – Community Infrastructure.

Outlined below is a summary of the main representations submitted in respect of Leisure and Recreation.

#### *General representations on Leisure and Recreation*

**Issue:** Leisure and recreation must figure more strongly in the strategic thinking.

**Proposed Response;** Noted. Appropriate studies will be undertaken to determine the exact nature of the Leisure and Recreation provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The LDP will provide a policy context, based on evidence, for the protection and provision of leisure and recreation facilities.

#### *Representations to SP 12 - Community Infrastructure*

**Issue;** The policy should be amended to reference the requirement for section 106 contributions to be justified in terms of proven need and demand.

**Response;** Noted. The LDP will provide a detailed policy context for the securing of contributions through planning obligations.

## **6. DRAFT LDP POLICY**

### **STRATEGIC POLICY**

#### **SP 12 - COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

**THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENTS ON LOCAL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE WILL NEED TO BE ADDRESSED BY APPROPRIATE ON SITE PROVISION OR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OFF SITE IMPROVEMENTS. PLANNING OBLIGATIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TO SECURE THE NECESSARY PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND**

**ENVIRONMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT. SUCH REQUIREMENTS MAY INCLUDE:**

**B) OPEN SPACE, PLAY AND YOUTH FACILITIES;**

**G) INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITY AND INDOOR LEISURE PROVISION;**

**Area Wide Policies**

Rhondda Cynon Taf is to see considerable residential development over the plan period of the LDP. Firstly, this development is going to create an increase in population within the County Borough, which will subsequently put further pressure and demand on the leisure and recreational facilities that currently exist here. Secondly, land within the urban areas and on their fringes, will become under increasing development pressure due to their higher land values in the settlement boundary.

In order to counter this, the following policies will provide the framework to ensure that adequate land and buildings can be provided for formal and informal recreation taking account of future development and future needs. The policies will also aim to address current levels of provision and deficiencies.

The policies will also address the need to protect all this valuable recreational land and facilities from development.

It is necessary that all communities within Rhondda Cynon Taf have well located, good quality, open space, sport, recreation and leisure facilities. It is acknowledged that this is

essential for the physical and mental health and well being of the population.

**POLICY LR 1 – PROVISION OF OPENSACE, NATURAL GREENSPACE AND SPORT/PLAY SPACE**

**IN AREAS OF OPENSACE AND/OR SPORT/PLAY SPACE DEFICIENCIES OR WHERE ACCESS TO NATURAL GREENSPACE CANNOT BE EASILY ACHIEVED, NEW DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE, OR CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE COST OF PROVIDING APPROPRIATE TYPES OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE OR IMPROVEMENTS TO ACCESS TO NATURAL GREENSPACE.**

The benefits of openspaces, whether formal sports areas, informal public openspaces or natural greenspaces, have been widely acknowledged as having a substantial role in improving and maintaining peoples physical and mental health and wellbeing. This is of particular importance in Rhondda Cynon Taf, considering the health problems across the County.

New or improved open spaces and more accessible natural greenspaces will also serve as a valuable recreational asset to the community, and may form an opportunity to encourage people from outside the community to visit the area.

As stated in Planning Policy Wales Planning, Local Planning Authorities may be justified in seeking Section 106 Planning Agreements, Obligations or securing Conditions from proposed developments to help ensure that local deficiencies in the provision of openspace are met.

The Council's openspace assessment identifies those areas within every settlement in Rhondda Cynon Taf that have a deficiency of provision of natural greenspace, public openspace and sports and play areas.

The openspace assessment was undertaken in line with Assembly Government requirements to undertake a County wide open space assessment, along with the agreement to implement the Countryside Council For Wales' Natural Greenspaces programme.

**Policy LR 2 – PROVISION OF PUBLIC INDOOR LEISURE AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY FACILITIES.**

**The policy and reasoned justification will be added following the conclusion of the leisure and recreational facilities study,**

**POLICY LR 3 – PROTECTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ON AREAS OF OPENSACE OR PLAYSPACE WITHIN THE DEFINED SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES WILL BE PERMITTED IF;**

- 1. IT CAN BE PROVEN THAT THERE IS A SURPLUS OF SUCH FACILITIES IN THE PARTICULAR SETTLEMENT, OR;**

**2. THE LOSS CAN BE REPLACED WITH AN EQUIVALENT OR GREATER PROVISION IN THE IMMEDIATE LOCALITY.**

**3. THE DEVELOPMENT IS CONSIDERED OF BEING IN DIRECT ASSOCIATION WITH, AND/OR AN ENHANCEMENT OF, THE EXISTING FACILITY.**

The Local Authority currently manages 2 premier parks - Ynysangharad and Aberdare, 53 community parks, 39 recreation grounds, 62 allotment sites and 209 children's play areas. It also manages Dare Valley Country Park and Barry Sidings Countryside Park.

The majority of these most frequently used public open spaces in Rhondda Cynon Taf are located within the settlement boundary and as such there is a presumption in favour of development. This policy is therefore required to ensure their protection from development, as they have such a significant role to play within their communities. This includes their significant recreational and amenity value, people's health and wellbeing and also their natural qualities within the urban areas, which helps to form the unique landscapes of the towns and villages in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**POLICY LR 4 – PROPOSALS FOR NEW LEISURE AND RECREATION FACILITIES WITHIN URBAN AREAS.**

**The policy and reasoned justification will be added following the conclusion of the leisure and recreational facilities study,**

**POLICY LR 5 – PROPOSALS FOR NEW LEISURE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

**The policy and reasoned justification will be added following the conclusion of the leisure and recreational facilities report,**

**POLICY LR 6 – PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY, BRIDLEWAYS AND CYCLE TRACKS.**

**THE EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY, BRIDLEWAYS AND CYCLE TRACKS WILL BE PROTECTED, MAINTAINED, IMPROVED AND EXTENDED. PROPOSALS FOR NEW PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY, BRIDLEWAYS AND CYCLE TRACKS IN THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS WILL BE SAFEGUARDED;**

- Taff Trail Links;
- University of Glamorgan Cyclepath;
- Porth bypass Community Route;
- Church Village Bypass Community Route;
- Rhondda Community Route;
- Heads of the Valleys Cyclepath;
- Coedely to Talbot Green;
- Porth to Maerdy;
- Parc Eirin to Blackmill;
- Cynon Trail and Community Links

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Rights of Way Improvement Plan identifies that the County Borough has approximately 2000 individual paths with a total length of 743km, of which, 646km

are footpaths, 82km are bridleways and 15km are by-ways open to all traffic. There are also 50 Km's of off-road cycletracks.

The built form of the County Borough means that most people have fairly good access to the rights of way and bridleway network and subsequent open countryside. This in turn allows for healthy exercise, free of charge.

The ROWIP does, however, identify areas of improvement, particularly where there are missing links in the network. Also, restoration of many is required, particularly Bridleways, of which there is also a shortage.

More improvements also need to be made to the network for the particular need of users with disabilities.

**POLICY LR 7 – ALLOTMENTS**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ON EXISTING ALLOTMENTS WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT;**

**A) THE ALLOTMENTS ARE SURPLUS TO LONG TERM LOCAL REQUIREMENTS, OR;**

**B) AN ALTERNATIVE EQUIVALENT PROVISION CAN BE MADE IN AN APPROPRIATE LOCATION IN THE SAME COMMUNITY.**

**MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN AREAS WHERE ADDITIONAL ALLOTMENT SPACE IS REQUIRED WILL BE**



**REQUIRED TO PROVIDE SUCH A FACILITY AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT.**

Allotments in Rhondda Cynon Taf are primarily located within, or on the fringe of, the settlement boundaries and are coming under increased development pressures. There are 60 allotment sites that are owned and managed by the council, whilst there are many more in private ownership. In many parts of the authority, these sites comprise of the little physically developable land that remain within certain communities.

Allotments need to be protected as they have an important role to play in the County on several levels. Firstly, they are an important open space and part of the cultural landscape and heritage of Rhondda Cynon Taf. They are also an important source of recreation to many, provide for healthy exercise and also provide for a sustainable food supply.

Where it is proposed to develop land used as statutory allotments for purposes other than as allotments, the consent of the National Assembly for Wales is required under Section 8 of the Allotments Act 1925.

**LR 8 - DUAL USE FACILITIES**  
**THE DUAL USE OF EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES THAT CAN BE USED SUCCESSFULLY WILL BE FAVOURED AND ENCOURAGED.**

Although in many cases, there is ever increasing strain being put on community facilities, there are sometimes cases

where certain facilities, both in terms of public buildings and open spaces, could be further taken advantage of.

**The policy and reasoned justification will be added following the conclusion of the leisure and recreational facilities report in consideration of it being a stand alone policy or as part of LR 2/LR4.**

**7. FURTHER ADVICE**

If you require any further advice or assistance in respect this or other LDP documents or wish to be placed on the Council's consultation database please contact a member of the Local Development Plan Team at:

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