

9. Sports and Leisure

9. SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES

9.1. Sports clubs and facilities

There is a long list of sports clubs within the area, (see app.9.1.), many of whom offer coaching facilities to youngsters. Non the less the DAWN survey revealed a desire in each community to improve and add to its facilities. In particular many of the community buildings would benefit from maintenance grants.

9.1.1. Northam is likely to lose the old school community centre which has been the venue for many clubs in the past, including the youth group, dog training, and badminton. It is hoped that the Bridge Trust will accept the offer made by Northam Town Council to purchase the Bridge Hall. This will give a welcome space for the clubs to restart, and is particularly needed if the youth group is to reconvene.

In addition a proposal has been prepared for a new village hall to be built on a small part of the Bone Hill car park. Such a proposal will need the support of TDC as landowners. The hall if built would be relatively small and would provide a meeting place for the under threes (Snapdragons), and public rooms for small gatherings, including adult education, society meetings, and could house the local library, releasing some land near the present library site for low cost housing. A previous consideration of this site lead to several objections from potential neighbours over the possible noise resulting. This is not likely to be a problem as currently envisaged. Northam is fortunate to have the Torridge Pool in its area, a well used facility, providing not just a swimming pool, but also a health and fitness club serving a wide area of Torridge, and two football

pitches, one for adults and one for young children, both of which must be retained, as must be the Lords Meadow playing area.

9.1.2. Appledore has a number of small halls which collectively provide a sufficient space for the community. It also has a small skateboard park and an adventure school. The possible closure of the public library is strongly opposed locally, and a Friends of Appledore Library has been established with the objective of keeping the library going. The plans include expansion of services including possible tourist information , a creche and IT area with internet access. The steering group supports this project and will recommend support in applying for grants through the MCTi .

9.1.3. Westward Ho! also has several venues for gatherings viz, the Baptist church hall, which is being built, and the Kingsley Hall. The latter has a good sized theatre, and several meeting rooms which are well used. It is run by a Community Association who have suggested a number of additional activities which could be provided given the funding. NTC would welcome the opportunity to assist with fund raising, should the Association decide to go down this route.

Wesward Ho! tennis club is considering resiting itself to a site which would be large enough to provide indoor courts and other racket sports, such as badminton and squash. NTC supports their intention, and consider a facility such as this would add to the tourist attraction s of the area. A site has not been selected, but it is intended that it should remain within the Northam boundary.

Bideford and Littleham cricket club have also decided to replace their pavilion on their existing ground, providing an all year round facility. The Royal North Devon golf club has recently gained approval for a golf range and training ground

The provision of these four, year round activities coupled with the existing football centre at Sandymere, will greatly enhance sports provision in the Northam urban area.