



Environment Agency

Water Related Recreation Strategy for the Southern Region

Consultation Draft 1997



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Foreword

This water related recreation strategy for the Environment Agency's Southern Region has been produced in partnership with the English Sports Council, with additional support from the Countryside Commission. The strategy has been developed by the Recreation Project Officer, a post now established within the Environment Agency, supported through a successful collaborative project.

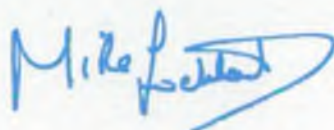
This joint management strategy is one of the first to be produced following the formation of the Environment Agency and the English Sports Council and covers a wide range of recreation issues relating to the water environment for which many organisations and individuals have a commitment and responsibility. Partnership and liaison with other organisations are therefore essential to manage and promote water related recreation. As a consultation document it will be distributed to those organisations in the Region which have an interest in water related recreation, to promote understanding, stimulate discussion, encourage partnerships and identify actions to achieve a lasting difference.

We hope that through improved understanding and coordination by recreation users and providers, the water environment will be safeguarded and managed sustainably to give opportunity for a diverse range of activities which can be enjoyed by present and future generations.

We look forward to and welcome your responses to this Consultation.



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Acknowledgements

The production of a document such as this involves a considerable amount of work and would not have been possible without assistance from a number of people.

Allison Thorpe has been in post as the Recreation Project Officer for almost three years. Allison is presently on maternity leave and I have been responsible for completing this Consultation document based on her initial work.

I would like to thank the representatives from the English Sports Council (South East and Southern Regions), Countryside Commission and the Environment Agency for their support of the Recreation Project Officer post and involvement in guiding the production of this document, in particular Alison Bullar, Lynda McCauley, Graeme Kerr, Jane Cecil and Ian Johnson.

Following a presentation of this document at a Regional Fisheries Advisory Committee, in July, I was delighted that it resulted in such a lively, constructive debate. Thank you to all who attended and for the comments and additional information received.

The Regional survey would not have been possible without the help of clubs and recreation providers and managers. Thank you to all those who filled in questionnaires, we look forward to your further involvement in Consultation of this document.

The Agency Recreation Technical Group members have been supportive of this post and of the production of this strategy and I am grateful to comments sent and advice given, in particular to Helen Partridge, Craig McGarvey, Hayley Lowes and Don Vickers.

I would also like to thank all Southern Region Agency staff including those in Conservation and Recreation in Kent, Sussex and Hampshire Areas including John Morgan, Rob Pilcher, Sacha Rogers, Jason Chambers, John Cave, Brian Smith, Phil Griffiths, Mark Elliot, Lawrence Talks, Tim Sykes, Tim Holzer and Stuart Taylor and in the Regional Office and in other functions who have provided guidance on particular aspects of the strategy. Thanks lastly but not least to Camille Braiden for all her support in producing the strategy, particularly with technical work in producing maps for the document.



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Executive Summary

This Recreation Strategy for the Southern Region is the main result of a collaborative project between the Environment Agency and the English Sports Council, with additional support from the Countryside Commission.

The Strategy focuses on those recreation activities which are related to the water environment and are related to the work of the Environment Agency, hereafter referred to as the Agency.

The main purpose of the document is to promote good practice in the planning and management of water related recreation and to promote provision for recreation as an integral part of the Agency. To work towards the Agency vision *"A better environment in England and Wales for present and future generations."*

Who is involved?

Almost everyone is involved in water related recreation to some extent whether it simply involves the enjoyment of the environment or taking a more active role in a formal sporting activity.

There are many organisations involved in the provision of recreation in the Region, each playing an important and differing role in delivering services, facilities, and management of recreation. These include statutory bodies such as local authorities, non governmental organisations including the Sussex Downs Conservation Board, Countryside

Projects, commercial operators and the many voluntary sector organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts and angling societies.

Purpose of document

This Recreation Strategy for the Region is the result of a collaborative project between the Agency and the English Sports Council, with additional support from the Countryside Commission.

The Strategy focuses on those recreation activities which are related to the water environment and the work of the Agency.

The main purpose of the document is to promote good practice in the planning and management of water related recreation and to promote provision for recreation as an integral part of the Agency functions to achieve the National Agency vision *"A better environment in England and Wales for present and future generations."*

The document is a non-statutory document, intended to act as a framework for recreation planning and management.

Environment Agency recreation duties

A summary of the Agency's statutory duties for Recreation as set out in the Environment Act, 1995 are given below:

- A general duty to promote the use of inland and coastal waters and land associated with them for recreational

purposes to the extent that it deems desirable

- to take account of recreation in carrying out all of the Agency's functions.
- to ensure that land or water in the Agency's control is made available where appropriate for recreational purposes.

Geographical area

The geographical area covered by this strategy is the Agency's Southern Region. It principally comprises the four counties of Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, East and West Sussex and Kent.

The total area of the Region covers 10,979 km² including an extensive coastline of more than 1100 km. There are 13 major river catchments in the Region covering more than 2500 km of river.



Recreation Survey

Over 600 sports and recreation groups have been surveyed by use of a designed questionnaire as well as those involved in provision of recreation, such as local authorities and water sports centres. This has established a picture of recreational activity in the Region, gaps in provision, and the main issues of concern to participants.

Issues, recommendations and principles

Discussion of issues has resulted in the production of principles and recommendations for actions. A number of issues are common to all activities, these include sustainability, balance between conservation and recreation, water quality and water safety, access, information and education, and Agency sites and activities. These are summarised below: In addition issues relevant to particular recreation activities have been discussed and principles and recommendations set out.

1. Sustainability

Sustainability is integral to environmental management and planning. It is an underlying theme to this document and will guide principles and recommendations for recreation. The term 'Sustainable development



has been defined in *Our Common Future*, the Brundtland Report, 1987 as,

"Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"

PRINCIPLES

1. The management of water related recreation should be sensitive to the needs of local communities and the character of rural and tranquil areas.
2. The promotion and management of recreation should be balanced with other interests such as the nature conservation value of sites.
3. Recreational sites near water and access to water should be protected from detrimental impacts of development. Water related recreational sites adjacent to or linking urban areas should be protected as an important resource.

2. Balance between conservation and recreation

Management for recreation must address the issue of the balance of interests between recreational activities, the need to protect the nature conservation interests of the environment and landscape features.

Issues

- Disturbance of wildlife and nature conservation by recreation activities
- Impacts of recreation on local landscapes

Suggested recommendations

- Research into the environmental impacts of relevant forms of recreation will be promoted to gain a better understanding.
- Best practice management techniques will be developed for sites.
- Recreation governing bodies and clubs should promote good Codes of conduct to improve environmental awareness for recreation users.
- All recreation facility proposals should be encouraged to have an environmental assessment and post project appraisal.
- Facilities at existing sites will be encouraged where there is a water related interest will be supported, where deemed appropriate.

PRINCIPLES

1. A balanced approach will be taken in promoting recreation activities considering environmental, social and economic factors.
2. Examples of good management practice in balancing the needs of wildlife and nature conservation with recreation interests should be promoted and recreational participants and site visitors should be made aware of nature conservation interests through education and interpretation.

3. Water quality

Many water related recreational activities involve contact with and sometimes

immersion in water including inland water bodies, rivers and coastal waters. Knowledge regarding water quality of waters used for recreation is vital to allow participants to make their own decisions as to safety of use of the water.

Issues

- Risk from waterborne infection
- Availability of water quality information to participants
- Pollution of water
- Water quality problems from litter, personal items and fly tipping
- Clarity of beach award information

Suggested Recommendations

- Codes of Conducts for recreation users should cover protection of the environment to reduce litter.
- Clubs and organisations should be encouraged to under take action to remove litter from recreation locations.
- That the responsible bodies work together to review and improve systems to make information regarding water quality more easily available to recreation participants where water quality data is relevant to the activity.
- Promote and encourage recreation participants to notify the Agency of any pollution incidents.
- To collect detailed information of sites used by recreation users.
- To Provide clarity on awards for beach sites, including Blue flag and Local authority awards, by responsible bodies.

PRINCIPLES

1. The Agency, under its statutory remit, will continue to work with relevant organisations including the water companies and industry to maintain, and where possible bring about improvements, in the quality of water in still waters, rivers, estuaries and around the coast.
2. Responsible agencies, including local authorities and the Agency, should work together to promote the distribution of water quality information to recreational users and the public, where water quality is relevant to the activity.

4. Water Safety

Water safety for recreation participants includes a number of factors such as hazardous plants including giant hogweed, multi-use of sites and the potential for occurrence of accidents and litter in riverine and coastal areas.

Issues

- Risks from hazardous plants eg Giant hogweed
- Risks from drowning

Suggested Recommendations

- Support initiatives aiming to improve safety for recreation users.
- Ensure that all special events have written consent as required in line with local byelaws
- Raise awareness of water safety issues by responsible bodies

- Promote good codes of practice regarding water safety through clubs and governing bodies.
- Seek additional ways to disseminate information to casual participants

PRINCIPLE

All users will be encouraged to act in a safe and responsible manner when on or near to water. All recreation users should be aware of safety regulations, local byelaws and Codes of practice produced by the Governing bodies of sport.

5. Access and facilities for recreation

The Agency has a general duty "to promote the use of inland and coastal waters and land associated with them for recreational purposes to the extent that it deems desirable." Access is generally needed to make use of water and associated land for recreational activities. The Agency encourages opportunities for recreation provision such as those made through voluntary access agreements with landowners.

Issues

- Inappropriate use of rights of way by non permitted users
- Access for disabled recreation participants
- Provision of facilities
- Transport to recreation sites

Suggested Recommendations:

- Further opportunities for recreation activities should be pursued as part of voluntary agreements with landowners in initiatives such as Countryside Stewardship, Access 2000 and Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) where appropriate.
- Review recreation provision within the Region to identify quiet areas and areas where further provision of recreational activity is desirable and possible.

PRINCIPLES

1. Visitor facilities should be promoted as they are an integral part of many recreation activities. Facilities should be located appropriately and, where possible, should be encouraged in areas where there is existing development, in keeping with landscape features and away from sensitive nature conservation sites.
2. The significance of slipways and launch sites as key recreational facilities should be recognised. Existing access facilities should be protected and appropriate provision of new facilities encouraged.
3. In the location of new recreational facilities, consideration should be given to schemes which are accessible by modes of transport other than personal car such as cycling, walking and public transport, including bus, rail and ferry.

4. Use should be made where possible of existing customer research data and further recreation studies should be promoted.
5. The provision of facilities such as fishing pegs for angling and visitor moorings are supported in principle. These should be constructed in appropriate areas following a strategic approach. Where Agency consent is required consideration will be made on a site by site basis and provision may not be appropriate everywhere.
6. Increased opportunities for informal and formal recreational activities should be promoted where desirable by organisations such as the Agency, local authorities and other relevant organisations working together with landowners.
7. Provision of disabled access will be made, where appropriate, in consultation with relevant representatives for disabled people. Suitability of areas for access will be assessed on a site by site basis and will not be promoted where safety of users will be compromised.
8. The Agency will encourage the creation of more access opportunities for waterside and water based recreation. The Agency endorses and encourages the use of voluntary access agreements as an effective means of achieving the shared use of waters.

6. Information and education

Information about recreation opportunities is a key factor in determining where people go to take part in sport and recreation and the nature of the activities they participate in. Information can be used as a management tool to both promote and control activity.

Issues

- Education initiatives to include recreation
- Interpretation at sites
- Communication between managers and providers of recreation and clubs.
- Research and development
- Availability of information regarding recreation opportunities

Suggested Recommendations:

- A list of available leaflets produced by Countryside River Projects, supported by the Agency and other organisations, should be produced
- Investigate further opportunities for dissemination of information, including investigation of further use of the Agency's Recreation database.
- Provide recreation input into education and assessment of the requirements of target audiences.
- Need to provide education materials on integrated water and environmental management linked with Agency functions to

compliment specialist education provided by other organisations.

- Continue to carry out educative and informative activities such as Green Link, across the Region.
- The Agency will encourage closer working relationships with organisations concerned to meet, discuss and understand each others requirements, issues and concerns and to help achieve consensus on the way forward. Improved relationships will increase co-ordination and help identify opportunities on which to collaborate.

PRINCIPLES

1. Relevant organisations should seek to raise awareness and keep recreation participants better informed.
2. Relevant organisations should adopt a coordinated approach to the provision of information.
3. The Agency and other organisations will aim to provide a greater understanding of recreation as an integral part of environmental education and environmental issues by, working in partnership with other relevant organisations.
4. Education material for young people will be linked to the National Curriculum.

7 Water Recreation management

Protecting the environment, making best use of the available resource and resolving conflicts between different interests are all dependent on successful management.

Issues

- Promotion of multi-use of sites by recreation groups.
- Conflicts between user groups

Suggested Recommendations:

- The Agency will contribute to the mediation of conflicts between relevant users of the water environment.
- Employ access controls and zoning to maximise the enjoyment of the water environment, as appropriate.

PRINCIPLE

Appropriate management techniques should be employed, involving both users and managers, to mitigate the effects of recreational pressure and enhance recreation experiences.



The Way forward

The document will be distributed widely to promote understanding of our own position regarding water related recreation and to stimulate discussion amongst other organisations in the Region. An Action Plan, will be produced to take forward recommended actions and principles and to combine views and comments from the consultation process.

Action Plan document

A second document, the Action Plan, will be produced to take forward recommended actions and principles and to combine views and comments from the consultation process.

Implementation of the Strategy

The Action Plan document will become an influential document for input into and review of Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPS) and used to guide day to day recreation activities of the Agency and other organisations involved in the provision and management of water related recreation.

1. Introduction

1.1 Need for management, provision and promotion of recreation

Inland and coastal waters have been used historically for a variety of leisure activities such as angling, sailing and canoeing. In addition to these recreational pursuits the attraction of the water environment is an important element for informal interests including day trips to popular sites, country parks and nature reserves.

Over recent years the range of recreational activities and leisure time available have both increased, offering greater opportunities and new challenges in areas such as windsurfing and use of personal watercraft. This has led to an increase in the participation in recreation activities and indicates a need for management by all organisations involved to protect the environment and to ensure a pleasurable recreational experience.

The water environment supports a wide range of plants and animals which are important in their own right and integral to the enjoyment of both coastal and inland water areas. In promoting and managing recreation activities the need to protect and enhance the natural environment is of particular importance.



1.2 Scope of the strategy

This consultation document addresses those activities which relate to the Agency's Statutory duties to recreation as set out in Section 2.2. These include recreation activities taking place on Agency owned sites and those which relate to the Agency's duty to take account of recreation in all of the Agency's functions, which are mainly related to the water environment. This strategy considers those major recreation activities which are either water dependent or are frequently drawn to the water's edge and are related to or may affect the other duties of the Agency. Activities not included are not considered to be significantly relevant to the activities of the Agency.

The balance between conservation and recreation is discussed in Section 5.2. Sustainability will be considered further in the implementation of this strategy through Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs) and similar plans and strategies.

This consultation covers a wide range of issues, recommendations and principles relating to the water environment. The Agency's duties are set out in Appendix 2, and it should be noted that responsibility for all actions does not lie only with the Agency. Many actions outlined will need to involve collaboration with a number of organisations and some

actions may be the responsibility of other partners.

It is essential that best use is made of the available resources to achieve sustainable recreation in the Region. The Region is split into three Areas, as illustrated by Figure 1, namely Kent Area, Sussex Area and Hampshire/Isle of Wight Area. Each Area is likely to have different priorities for recreation provision and management and through the consultation it is intended to identify these priorities in development of the Action Plan which will be produced as a partner document following the consultation.



1.3 Future Vision

The National Environment Agency vision is:

'A better environment in England and Wales for present and future generations'

Achievement of this vision for recreation in Southern Region will be guided by the implementation of this strategy.

Figure 1 Environment Agency Southern Region



Legend:



Main River
Region

△ Regional Office
○ Area Offices

SCALE 1: 947600
metres : metres



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Aims

The aims of the strategy are:

1. To provide guidance to all those involved in planning, managing and providing for water related recreation across the Agency's Southern Region.
2. To promote provision for water related recreation by all organisations working in and around the water environment.
3. To encourage and facilitate effective joint working and partnership between such organisations.
4. To promote provision for recreation as an integral part of Agency functions by all Agency Staff.
5. To present an overview of water related recreation in Southern Region on rivers, canals, enclosed waters, estuarine and coastal waters.

Objectives

1. To identify some of the main issues, constraints and pressures associated with water related recreation in the Region.
2. To set out a number of best practice principles to support and guide the planning and management of recreation on and around water.
3. To propose a series of recommendations to assist in the future promotion and management of water related recreation.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the strategy is to promote good practice in the planning and management of sport and recreation in the Region. It is a framework document based on National Agency policy developed to guide the future recreation work of both the Agency and others in the Region and to generate discussion of issues, partnerships and actions between all relevant organisations, to achieve a lasting difference.



This strategy is intended as a working, 'living' document and will be updated as required to reflect changing needs and opportunities.

1.5 Strategy development and Consultation

1.5.1 Methodology

In developing this strategy, the Agency has consulted a wide range of organisations and has been guided by their many strategies and development plans. Recent trends and statistics have been examined for water related recreation and visits have been made to a number of the most popular sites in use for recreation around the Region.

Questionnaires have been sent to over 600 sports and recreation groups, those involved in provision of recreation, such

as local authorities and water sports centres. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix 1. The information collected on recreational sites, facilities and activities now forms part of a computer database held by the Agency and used in the development of this consultation document. This has given an indication of the main resources for water related recreation in our Region, key issues, gaps in recreation provision and opportunities for improving that provision and improving practice in the management of our resources.

We are aware that not all clubs and groups involved in the provision and management of recreation will have been contacted as part of the survey and apologise to those we have not been able to contact. Any completed questionnaires or additional information from clubs would be welcomed.

From the issues identified during the preparation of this strategy a series of general principles have been drawn together. The principles are intended to reflect the objectives of the Agency's national strategies and other relevant strategic guidance for the area. They have been prepared jointly with the Recreation Steering Group which includes representatives of the Agency, the Countryside Commission and the English Sports Council. Most importantly, these principles are based on the findings of the survey of many recreation clubs, user groups and commercial providers across the Region. Agency Conservation and Recreation staff have been consulted in addition to informal consultation with various governing bodies and reference to documents relating to a number of aspects of water related recreation in the Region.

1.5.2 Results

A distribution list for questionnaires was compiled from existing databases and consultation with organisations including local authorities and governing bodies. This list included clubs and water sports centres.

The survey response rate was encouraging with 63% of questionnaires having been returned. A series of maps have been produced to illustrate the distribution of principle locations for a number of recreation activities, to highlight provision in recreation. These are presented in the appendices and referred to in the text.

Whilst the information gained does not give a complete picture of recreation provision in the Region the information provides a focus for consultation and for addition to existing knowledge. Through the survey some information regarding activities which do not occur as part of a club such as those involving quiet enjoyment of the environment has been gained but this requires further development through consultation.

1.5.3 Consultation

This Consultation document sets out principles and recommended actions based on the research and consultation initially carried out.

A second document, the Action Plan, will be produced to take forward recommended actions and principles and to combine views and comments from the consultation process. Responsible partners for all issues and recommendations still need to be identified.

1.5.4 Managing the Consultation

Effective communication and consultation is the key to the success of any strategy. This document will be distributed widely to promote understanding of our own position regarding water related recreation and to stimulate discussion amongst other organisations in the Region. With the support of our partners the English Sports Council and the Countryside Commission, it is our intention to manage the consultation process in the following way:

- Full Consultation Drafts to all major recreation organisations in the Region
- Executive Summary to all clubs, user groups, commercial providers
- A series of Water Related Recreation Workshops to be held across the Region, open to representatives of the organisations mentioned above.

1.5.5 Consultation requirements

Through the process of consultation we are looking for your guidance, to address a number of key issues, in particular the following:

- Are there any additional opportunities for recreation in the Region, which have not already been identified?
- Are there any additional issues which have not been identified and addressed in this document?
- Can you provide further information to add to maps of principle locations for recreation in the Region?
- Who are the main partners for each of the recommendations?
- Which should be the main priorities for recreation provision and issues to be resolved in Southern Region?
- How to turn the recommendations into actions
- Identification of opportunities for funding.

This is your opportunity to comment and influence the Agency's Regional Recreation Strategy. We welcome your views on this document and invite you to participate in the forthcoming consultation process. The importance of building partnerships and working with others in implementing the recommendations in the strategy is recognised and we hope that this document and the subsequent consultation period will lead to action at a local level.



2. Water Recreation Management

2.1 Key Players in Countryside and Water Related Recreation

There are many organisations involved in the provision of recreation in the Region, each playing an important and differing role in delivering services, facilities, and management or planning for the future of recreation. These include statutory bodies such as local authorities; responsible for maintaining sites, providing visitor and outdoor centres and ranger services; non governmental organisations: for example, the Sussex Downs Conservation Board, Countryside Projects; commercial operators and the many voluntary sector organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts and angling societies. Together these organisations make up the key players in countryside and water recreation in Southern Region. Due to the large number of organisations involved a coordinated approach to management is required.

Nationally, the Agency, the English Sports Council and the Countryside Commission are working together to define respective roles with regard to recreation. A memorandum of understanding (MoU)¹ is presently being produced between these organisations to develop and promote sport and recreation between people and the countryside.

As part of the Agency's recreation work and to help fulfill its recreational duties, this Recreation Strategy has been developed with the support of the

English Sports Council and in liaison with the Countryside Commission. This Regional strategy aims to reflect activities on a national level, remaining a flexible document which will be updated and revised as progress is made and as changing pressures emerge.

2.2 Environment Agency

The Agency was formed in April 1996. As a powerful environmental regulator the Agency has many responsibilities to help protect land, air and water. The Agency's operational activities include 'Pollution Prevention and Control' and 'Water Management'. Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) includes the regulation of the disposal of controlled waste, protecting and improving the quality of rivers estuaries and coastal waters and regulating major industrial processes, nuclear sites and premises authorised to dispose of radioactive waste; and 'Water Management' includes responsibilities for water resources, flood defence, fisheries, ecology and recreation.

The Agency does not have exclusive responsibility for all aspects of environmental regulation and management and needs to work with various other bodies on aspects of environmental protection. For example, air pollution arising from household and

commercial premises and many smaller industries; litter; environmental health issues; and land use planning are the direct responsibility of the local authorities.

2.2.1 Fisheries Ecology and Recreation

Specific statutory recreation duties are summarised below and set out in detail in Appendix 2.

Summary of Agency Duties to Recreation

- A general duty to promote the use of inland and coastal waters and land associated with them for recreational purposes to the extent that it deems desirable.
- to take account of recreation in carrying out all of the Agency's functions.
- to ensure that land or water in the Agency's control is made available where appropriate for recreational purposes.

The Agency is guided in its recreation work by the 'Code of Practice for Conservation, Access and Recreation' issued in 1989 by the Department of the Environment².

Responsibility for recreation lies with the Fisheries, Recreation, Conservation and Navigation (FRCN) department. This department is to change to Fisheries, Ecology and Recreation (FER) in each



Area, in late 1997. In Southern Region, day to day recreation work is carried out from the three Area offices: Kent, Sussex and Hampshire, by the FRCN Managers and Area Conservation and Recreation Officers. Their work is supported by the Regional Recreation Officer who undertakes a policy and strategic role as well as professional support to particular Area projects. The Agency's Regional Fisheries Advisory Committee provide advice and guidance to the function with local advice provided by the three Area Environmental Groups.

Conservation and Recreation Officers are involved in screening a range of plans and strategies including local development plans, individual planning applications, internal Agency consents and authorisations such as Land drainage consents and Water Resources applications. The Agency also carries out promotional recreational work. This work involves projects in collaboration with external partners, ranging from physical enhancements, such as the construction of footpaths and landing stages, to longer term initiatives such as river based countryside management projects.

The Agency currently supports a number of collaborative countryside project initiatives. These projects are involved with management of the water environment at a local level, working with local communities and have a remit for both conservation and recreation. A wide range of enhancement schemes are carried out through these projects. These are covered further in Section 5.10.

The Fisheries, Conservation and Navigation duties are closely linked with those of recreation.

2.2.2 Navigation

In Southern Region, the Agency is the navigation authority for the Medway Navigation and is the harbour authority for the Harbour of Rye. Both the Medway and the Harbour of Rye are used extensively for water sports and informal recreation and are seen as significant recreational resources in the Region. Inland navigation is covered in further detail in Section 6.7, and the Harbour of Rye covered in more detail in Section 5.8.



2.2.3 Fisheries

The Agency has a general duty to maintain, improve and develop salmon, trout, freshwater fish and eel fisheries under its jurisdiction, under the Water Resources Act, 1991, and to regulate and protect fisheries as defined in the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 and the Salmon Act 1986.

The Agency's responsibilities to freshwater fisheries are supported through the requirement for all anglers aged 12 years or over, who fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish or eels in England and Wales, to hold an Agency rod licence. This income funds much of the Agency's work to achieve the above remit.

2.3 English Sports Council

The English Sports Council is responsible for leading the development of sport in England. This is achieved by influencing and serving the public, voluntary and commercial sectors. The main aim of the English Sports Council can be summarised as: *more people involved in sport, more places to play sport and higher standards of sporting performance leading to more medals.*

In pursuing these interests the English Sports Council seeks to maintain and develop sporting opportunity in the countryside, on rivers and around the coast. Twenty three priority sports have been identified by the English Sports Council. Six of these relate to countryside and water recreation and are particularly relevant to this strategy, namely: cycling, canoeing, orienteering, rowing, sailing and triathlon.

Development Officers for cycling, and rowing have recently been appointed for the Region with further officers for canoeing and sailing intended.

The English Sports Council is involved in developing good practice and has produced reports such as *"Good practice in the planning and management of sport and active recreation in the countryside"* in partnership with the Countryside Commission. In addition the English Sports Council has a significant involvement in a number of Estuary Management Plans around the Region including the Medway Estuary and Swale Management Plan* in North Kent and Thames Estuary Management Plan.

2.4 Countryside Commission

The Countryside Commission aims to protect the English Countryside and ensure it can be used and enjoyed now and in the future. The Countryside Commission is concentrating on pioneering ways of managing the countryside, advising on policy, translating policy into practice and encouraging other organisations to use successful ideas. This is carried out through research and development, giving policy advice, providing information, supporting training and offering grant aid to others in the public, private and voluntary sector.



2.5 Links with local plans and other initiatives and strategies

Provision for recreation planning is made by a number of different organisations through both statutory and non-statutory plans. This document has been developed to provide strategic guidance for input to these plans and initiatives to ensure that water recreation interests are covered and opportunities identified at the local level.

2.5.1 Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs)

The definition of a LEAP is as given below:

A Local Environment Agency Plan (known as a 'LEAP') is the Agency's integrated local catchment management plan for identifying and assessing, prioritising and solving local environmental issues directly related to the Agency's Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) and Water Management functions, taking into account costs and benefits and the views of the Agency's local customers.'

2.5.2 Statutory Planning Framework

The statutory planning framework which guides and controls land use and development includes Local Plans, Mineral and Waste Plans. The Agency is a statutory consultee for these plans. Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes set out the Government's policies on different aspects of planning. Local planning authorities must take their contents into account in preparing their development plans. A number of the PPG guidance documents cover aspects of sustainable recreation and the countryside eg PPG 7, Countryside, PPG 9 Nature Conservation and PPG 17 Sport and Recreation, (which is currently under review).

2.5.3 Non-statutory Planning Initiatives

A number of initiatives have been set up to address issues on the coast and estuaries, these include Shoreline Management Plans (SMP) and Estuary Management Plans (EMP). SMPs are

prepared by the Agency and/or Coastal Authority following guidance produced by MAFF⁵. EMPs are integrated plans produced for the sustainable use of estuaries by consensus. EMPs are to be implemented by all estuary users and regulatory authorities, for example, Medway Estuary and Swale and the Solent Forum in Southern Region.

Other important strategic documents include the English Sports Council's Regional Recreation Strategy for the South East, published in 1994 and the various strategies for individual sports. Also the ten year strategy produced by the Countryside Commission, 'A Living Countryside'⁶.

2.6 Funding and Resource opportunities

2.6.1 Staff

The Agency's National Recreation Strategy aims to have at least one full-time dedicated Agency Recreation post in place in each Region. This has already been achieved in Southern Region through the existing Regional Recreation Officer.

Additional dedicated recreation staff are required. The present best practice situation is thought to be a team of full-time Recreation staff based at Region, with support given to National initiatives and the undertaking of Area work. This system is presently operated in Thames



Region. Flexibility is provided with effort being directed at Areas with greatest need and allows for changing priorities.

2.6.2 Funding

A number of different funding opportunities are available for projects and vary in suitability according to the scale and nature of the projects proposed. A major recent funding opportunity relevant to recreation activities and facilities is the National Lottery. In addition the Landfill tax offers additional funding for charitable trusts. Other opportunities are available from European funding and other grants such as BT Countryside for All grants.

2.7 Priorities

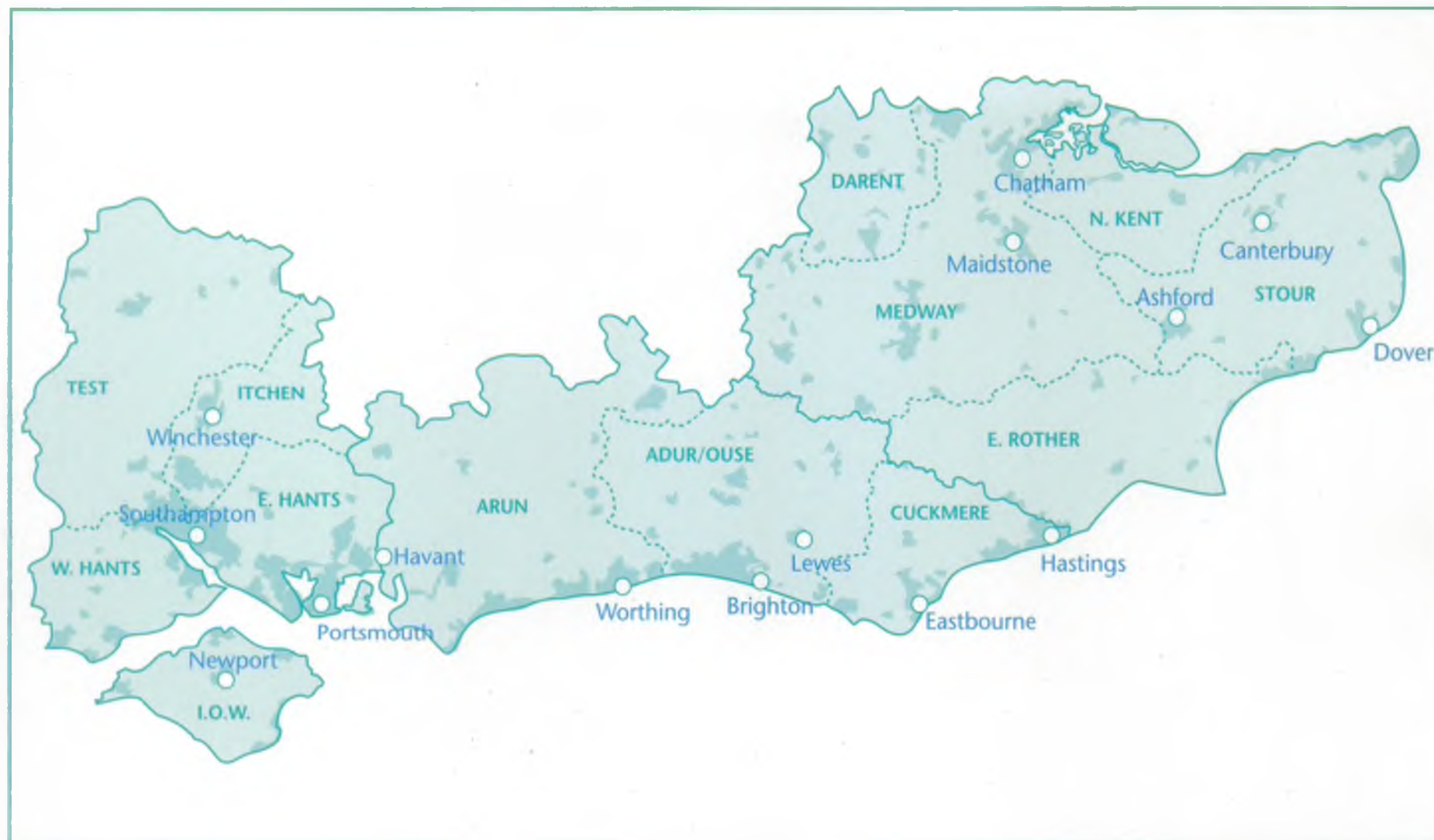
Understanding and taking account of supply and demand for recreation is to be a priority of the Agency Recreation department. The Agency will take a proactive approach to identifying the need for recreation facilities and provision to improve understanding. This has in part already been achieved through the Regional Survey to assess recreation provision in the Region and interpretation and policy proposed through production of this consultation draft. This will be in addition to promotion, planning and provision of information and advice already carried out by the Agency.

Recommendation

- To identify priority areas of recreation work in each Agency Area, within Southern Region, through this Consultation document to make best use of available resources.



Figure 2 Representation of a number of significant urban areas in Southern Region



Legend:



Urban Areas



Area Boundaries



Southern Region



Catchment Boundaries



Town Centre

SCALE 1:1010100
metres : metres



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Drawing By: C. Braiden

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3. The Resource – its present use

3.1 The Natural Resource

The geographical area covered by this strategy is the Agency's Southern Region, as shown in Figure 1. It principally comprises the counties of Hampshire/Isle of Wight, East and West Sussex and Kent. Parts of Surrey and Greater London are also included in the Region, as boundaries are set according to river catchments.



The topography of the Region is dominated by the North and South Downs together with the Weald in the South East and the Hampshire Basin in the West. English Nature and the Countryside Commission, with help from English Heritage have produced a map, *"The Character Map of England; landscape, wildlife and natural features"* which identifies areas by their ecology and landscape. These include areas such as Romney Marshes, Pevensey Levels and the New Forest in Southern Region.

The Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) scheme, initiated by MAFF, aims to safeguard areas of the countryside where

the landscape, wildlife or historic interest is of national importance. The scheme supports the use of traditional farming practices to enhance the environment. ESA areas in Southern Region include the Test Valley, North Kent Marshes and The South Downs.

A number of areas are designated for their conservation interest in Southern Region. These areas include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) of which there are 378 with 271 of these being water dependent. In addition there are a number of sites under European designations including Ramsar sites, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Other areas are designated for national conservation interests including National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and for local interests including Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs).

The total area of the Region covers 10,979 km² including an extensive coastline of more than 1100 km. There are 13 major river catchments in the Region covering more than 2500 km of river. Significant enclosed waters include the principal water company owned reservoirs of which Bewl Water is the largest and perhaps most widely used for water related recreation. Other enclosed waters in the Region include former mineral working sites, a vast range of small lakes and ponds, in addition to a number of canals which provide a valuable resource for nature conservation and some forms of recreation.

The Region has a number of key national sites for recreation including the Solent (which has 30,000 recreational craft present annually,³¹) Chichester Harbour, Hayling Island, Medway Estuary and Swale and a number of the key English Channel ports such as Portsmouth Harbour used for recreational access.

The New Forest in Hampshire currently attracts seven million day visitors per annum (visitors from outside the Heritage Area) in addition to 17 million local visitors per annum. Sixty five per cent of visitors to the New Forest come from Southern England. (*Forestry Commission, pers comm.*)



Landscape

Much of the Region is valued for its high landscape and nature conservation interest and many areas are designated for their special interest. There are nine designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (AONB) within the Region: the Isle of Wight, East Hampshire, South Hampshire Coast, the Sussex Downs, Isle of Wight, Kent Downs, Chichester Harbour, Surrey Hills and the High Weald. These areas by their distinctive character and outstanding natural beauty are of national importance representing the finest landscapes in the country. They are living landscapes containing

communities who live and work with them. AONBs are designated by the Countryside Commission.

Heritage Coasts are non-statutory sites defined by the Countryside Commission in consultation with Local Authorities.

Five areas are designated Heritage Coasts including Dover to Folkestone and South Foreland in Kent, Sussex, Hamstead and Tennyson in Hampshire/Isle of Wight.

3.2 The Human Resource

The population density in many parts of the Region is significantly greater than

that in other parts of the UK. In addition, the Region receives an annual influx of holiday makers each year as well as significant weekend and day trip visitors seeking recreation activity. The close proximity of Southern Region to Europe means that it receives a number of visitors from overseas, at coastal towns including Dover and Ramsgate. The resident population of the Region is estimated at 4.6 million in 1991 with 10.5 million holiday trips made to the Region⁸. A representation of a number of significant urban areas is given in Figure 2.



4. Recreation Overview

4.1 Informal recreation overview

Water is a known attraction for a range of activities which are based on enjoyment of the countryside. Activities such as walking, bird watching, cycling, art, photography, picnicking and simply enjoying the view are drawn to water both for the interest offered by the waterside and that the water environment is the habitat of many wildlife species. River valleys are by nature flat and are attractive to the less mobile and the casual day walker. Participants in informal recreation, including recreational cycling and bird watching, form by far the largest number of recreational participants. The very nature of their activities makes it difficult to estimate the true numbers involved. Walking is discussed further in Section 6.1.

In Southern Region provision for informal recreation includes the country parks, bird and nature reserves, seaside resorts, riverside and coastal footpaths, cycle tracks. Participants include not only the local population but also people who visit the region every year.

The key providers for informal recreation are the local authorities with their responsibilities, for managing amongst other things, public footpaths, coastal resorts and many other facilities. Also the Sussex Downs Board, the Wildlife Trusts, conservation bodies, and local landowners through Countryside Stewardship schemes.

The Agency also plays a role in providing for informal recreation on land in its ownership. There are a number of reserves in the Region including Wildlife Trust reserves and those of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

4.2 Water sports overview

It is generally accepted that participation in all forms of outdoor recreation is on the increase nationally and has been throughout much of the 20th century. There are a number of factors thought to contribute to the growth in water based recreation. These include the general increase in mobility of the population; the introduction of new forms of water sport, for example the Sail Board and more recently the Personal Water Craft (PWC) or Jetski; technological advances in production of materials which have led to lighter, faster, and more durable craft; and finally the availability of water sports on many foreign holidays which encourage people to continue with these activities on their return.

Recent studies by the British Marine Industries Federation (1994) suggest that more than 4.7 million adults are currently involved in boating and water

sports with another 3.6 million interested in participating. Available statistics indicate that water, including rivers and canals, lakes and reservoirs, coastal and estuarine sites, plays a significant part in the provision of outdoor recreation in the UK.

In 1988, an estimated 247 million recreational trips involved water in some form, rivers, still waters and coastal waters. Of these trips more than 15 million of them were to take part in fishing, whilst 10 million leisure trips involved participants in both powered and unpowered water sports.⁹

During 1994 it is estimated that the adult population of Britain made over 5,500 million visits from home of which: 5200 million (95%) were leisure day visits. 13% of these (652 million) included walking; 4% (180 million) were made to the coast and 3% (158 million visits) were made to canals and rivers.¹⁰

Southern Region

Southern Region is thought to be one of the most significant areas of the country for water related recreation: this is due in part to the extensive natural resource presented by the coastline, the long river estuaries and the shallow harbour areas which are suitable for many types of water based recreation. A variety of sources indicate that the Region is the national focus for many water sports activities.¹¹



Some demand in the Region is generated by the presence of nationally and internationally important sites. The Solent, as the stage for international yachting events, is perhaps the most well known which is an indicator of its importance as a national focus for water sports activity. The large number of clubs and other organisations providing for recreation in the Region is also an

indicator of the level of recreational activity. In addition while many people take part in water sports through club membership or use of facilities at an outdoor centre, many more participants are individuals enjoying water related recreation in a more informal manner.

Some forms of recreation lend themselves more easily to this type of 'casual' participation, for example

small trailable boats can use public slipways. Canoeing and windsurfing are particularly suitable as craft are easily transportable and may be launched from informal launching sites such as beaches and river banks. Similarly angling with its large base in clubs and club membership is also pursued by non club participants at the many day ticket waters available in the Region.



5. Discussion of general issues, principles and recommendations

The issues discussed in this section are common to all recreation activities. Further issues relevant to particular activities are discussed in Section 6.

5.1 Sustainability

Sustainability is integral to environmental management and planning. It is an underlying theme to this document and will guide principles and recommendations for recreation. In addition a number of issues are common to both formal and informal recreation activities addressed in this strategy. These include information and education, equality of opportunity, management and water safety.

There are a large number of demands on the resource such as commercial use of land and water, pressure for development land and conservation value of sites. These may pose both potential constraints and offer opportunities for recreation.

The term 'Sustainable development' first came to prominence in the *World Conservation Strategy* published by the World Conservation Union. It later achieved increased status with the publication of *Our Common Future*, the Brundtland Report, in 1987 and has been defined as,

"Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"

5.1.1 Requirement for a Sustainable Approach

Sustainability is an underlying theme to the activities of the Agency and other organisations. The principle aim of the Agency is specified in Section 4 of the Environment Act 1995:

Environment Act 1995

Section 4 Principal aim and objectives of the Agency – Sustainable Development.

(1) It shall be the principal aim of the Agency (subject to and in accordance with the provisions of this Act or any other enactment and taking into account any likely costs) in discharging its functions so to protect or enhance the environment, taken as a whole, as to make the contribution towards attaining the objective of achieving sustainable development mentioned in subsection (3) below.

(3) The guidance given under subsection (2) above must include guidance with respect to the contribution which, having regard to the Agency's responsibilities and resources, the Ministers consider it appropriate to make, by the discharge of its functions, towards attaining the objective of achieving sustainable development".

5.1.2 Local Agenda 21

In 1992 a United Nations conference on the Environment and Development (Earth Summit) was held in Rio. A number of initiatives and principles were produced as a result including Agenda 21.

Agenda 21 is a global action plan for the 21st century produced from the Rio Earth Summit. It aims to produce a framework for a more sustainable way of life bringing together economic, environmental and social concerns.

Agenda 21 carries the message '*Think Globally, Act Locally*' and recognises the fundamental need to address local issues by activities of local communities.

Local authorities have been seen as the focus for promoting and encouraging local community action, and supporting local initiatives. The Agency and other organisations have a role to play in providing information and expertise to the Agenda 21 process.

Sustainability will be applied at a local level through principles set out in Sections 5 and 6.



5.1.3 Impact of Leisure Activities on the Environment

The Government has addressed the impact of leisure activities upon the environment within the context of the "United Kingdom Sustainable Development Strategy". Environment Committee Fourth Report, The Environmental Impact of Leisure Activities, Volume II, Minutes of Evidence.¹²

From this report it is noted that any activity will have an impact on the environment. Impacts of any activity will vary according to a number of factors including timing, location and duration. Impacts may not always be detrimental but may be positive influences on the environment. Recreation is generally seen as less important than other factors in causing disturbance to the environment.¹¹

A number of potential environmental impacts of recreational activities are listed including overcrowding, traffic, wear and tear, disturbance and impacts of inappropriate development. Disturbance may include impacts of recreational activities on wildlife such as nesting or wintering birds, sensitive habitats, erosion of footpaths and to local communities. A number of research studies have been carried out to address aspects of potential impacts such as Agency Research and Development on Impact of Navigation on Wildlife and methods for assessing River bank Erosion for example. Disturbance is covered further in Section 5.2.

5.1.4 Location of Recreation

Another issue relating to sustainable recreation is transport and location of recreational activities. Provision of recreation facilities should be easily

accessible by use of sustainable transport such as by public transport (bus, rail or ferry) or cycling. The environment is integral to the enjoyment of most recreation activities. There is a need for a balance between sustaining active sporting recreation activities and conserving the natural environment.

The challenge for the Agency and other organisations is to promote a level of recreational activity which can be sustained by the natural environment.

PRINCIPLES

1. The management of water related recreation should be sensitive to the needs of local communities and the character of rural and tranquil areas.
2. The promotion and management of recreation should be balanced with other interests such as the nature conservation value of sites.
3. Recreational sites near water and access to water should be protected from detrimental impacts of development. Water related recreational sites adjacent to or linking urban areas should be protected as an important resource.

5.2 Balance between Conservation and Recreation

Management for recreation must address the issue of the balance of interests between recreational activities, the need to protect the nature conservation interests of the environment and landscape features.

5.2.1 Nature Conservation

A number of sites in Southern Region have been designated for their conservation interest. These include internationally important sites such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the EC Habitats Directive, nationally important sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs) as designated by English Nature and designated sites of local importance including Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), designated by local authorities. It should be recognised that it is not just these designated sites which are important for nature conservation but also includes wildlife in the wider countryside. Biodiversity Action Plans have been produced both nationally and locally. These identify both species and habitats in water related areas including habitats, such as reedbeds, and species, such as otters and the white clawed crayfish.

5.2.2 Landscape

It is essential that the impact of any activities on any designated landscape areas such as AONBs are taken into account and that these are sympathetic to the local landscape of an area. In planning for recreation and other development, organisations involved need to deliver sensitive management with regard to the landscape where possible.



Existing site management should be such that awareness and appreciation of the environment is created through recreational activities¹.

5.2.3 Impacts and management

The countryside is valued by different people in different ways and particular activities may be perceived to be detrimental to the environment. In environmental management a balanced view needs to be taken with investigation into any likely impacts. In general "recreation is generally seen as less important than other factors such as land management, pollution and development (although some development may be linked to leisure activity)" as a factor impacting on the environment, Environment Committee, 1995.

Up to date knowledge about the current 'state of the environment' relating to recreation is required and also about the impacts of recreation on the environment. A number of studies have been carried out including R&D currently being progressed on Environmental Impacts of recreation on Wildlife by the Agency and details included in the Environment Committee Fourth Report The Environmental Impact of Leisure Activities.¹² However there is still a lack of research into the effects of various types of recreational activity on the natural resource and on wildlife and some wildlife are clearly sensitive to recreational pressures such as disturbance and pollution.

This lack of information means that managers of areas which are used for recreation activities and have significant nature conservation value must take a

precautionary approach and restrict some recreational activities. There are however, many examples around the country where management arrangements have achieved a sensible balance between conservation and recreational interests through measures such as spatial zoning of sites, temporal zoning of activities and general awareness raising of conservation issues amongst recreational users. Such good practice should contribute to the resolution of many existing conflicts between recreation and conservation and should be widely promoted. Successful working towards sustainable recreation in Southern Region requires above all a commitment from all organisations to cooperate in planning for, managing and monitoring recreation and identifying opportunities for improving the way we work together.

Recommendations

- Research into the environmental impacts of relevant forms of recreation will be promoted to gain a better understanding.
- Best practice management techniques will be developed for sites.
- Recreation governing bodies and clubs should promote Codes of Conduct/Practice to improve environmental awareness for recreation users.
- Proposed recreation facilities within sensitive areas should be accompanied by provision of an Environmental, Socio and Economic Assessment including on-going monitoring and post project appraisal. Monitoring

should include all parties likely to be affected by the proposal. All recreation facility proposals should be encouraged to have an environmental assessment and post project appraisal.

- Facilities at existing sites where there is a water related interest will be supported, where deemed appropriate. This includes provision of key leisure facilities such as toilets, car parking, access, and information.



PRINCIPLES

1. A balanced approach will be taken in promoting recreation activities considering environmental, social and economic factors.
2. Examples of good management practice in balancing the needs of wildlife and nature conservation with recreation interests should be promoted and recreational participants and site visitors should be made aware of nature conservation interests through education and interpretation.

5.3 Water Quality

Many water related recreational activities involve contact with and sometimes immersion in water including inland water bodies, rivers, estuaries and coastal waters.

Water in its natural, untreated state contains large numbers of micro-organisms (including bacteria and viruses) chemicals and suspended solids, such as mud particles. Most of the micro-organisms are harmless although a few can cause disease.

5.3.1 Waterborne infection

A number of infections and diseases are recognised in association with recreational use of water. Those listed in UK Symposium on health related water microbiology¹³ include typhoid fever, hepatitis A, Leptospirosis, minor gastro intestinal illness and symptoms relating to eye, ear and respiratory tract.

Leptospirosis

One particular disease about which there has been much public attention is Weils disease or Leptospirosis. Weils disease is caused by a bacterium which is carried in the urine of infected animals, particularly rats. The disease can be caught from water, banks and vegetation contaminated with such urine.

Algal blooms

A more common concern is that of illness associated with blue-green algae, which may form dense growths known as blooms. These usually occur between spring and autumn in lakes and ponds (very rarely in rivers) with around ten to twenty new waters affected each year in Southern Region. Under certain

environmental conditions the algae may form a scum on the surface and this presents the highest risk to water users. In about 70% of cases the algae produce toxins which may cause a variety of illnesses in humans who come into contact with the scum, ranging from skin irritation to vomiting and diarrhoea. If pets or livestock swallow significant quantities of scum death may result. It is the responsibility of the owner of a water to take appropriate precautions when a bloom occurs. In severe cases or where risk is high (for example, with immersion sports) it may be necessary to close the water until the bloom subsides.

Action

Advice on water safety is included in a number of Agency publications such as "Have fun, Have a care, information for river canoeists". To minimise risks from waterborne infection, recreation participants should:

- See that cuts and scratches are covered with waterproof plasters before you set out to participate in contact water related activities.
- Do not purposely take into the mouth or ingest untreated water from the natural environment
- Ensure that any abrasions received on or beside the water are washed under running tap water and covered with a waterproof dressing as soon as possible.
- wash your hands before eating, drinking or smoking

- Be aware of symptoms relating to waterborne illnesses and, if you do feel ill, tell your doctor that you have been in contact with water.
- Avoid contact with any fresh or dried algal scum and the water close to it. Keep pets and livestock away from affected water.

Governing bodies also issue guidelines to participants for individual sports.

5.3.2 Responsible bodies

A number of organisations have responsibilities for water quality, these include the Agency, Local Authority Environmental Health Department and Water companies. There may often be confusion among recreation users as to which organisation they should contact regarding particular aspects of water quality.

Recommendation

- *That the responsible bodies work together to review and improve systems to make information regarding water quality more easily available to recreation participants where Water Quality data is relevant to the activity.*



5.3.3 Agency responsibilities for Water Quality

The Agency has a number of duties and powers under the Water Resources Act 1991 and Environment Act 1995.

The Agency issues consents for discharges to controlled waters, these consents containing quality conditions related to the identified water use. There are presently no Water Quality objectives related to inland recreational water



related activities. Discharging effluents without the consent of the Agency to controlled waters is an offence in all but the most exceptional circumstances. The Agency is required to enforce these provisions and has the power to prosecute. The Agency also has responsibilities regarding pollution prevention such as regulating oil storage and silage liquor.

The guiding legislation affecting recreation on coastal waters are the EC Bathing Water Directive, EC Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) and EC Dangerous Substances Directive and daughter directives. Under the Bathing Water directive a number of bathing waters have been designated around the country according to the number of people estimated to use the beach in the summer bathing season.

The Agency is charged with sampling and analysis of bathing waters in accordance with the requirements of the EC Bathing Waters Directive to assess compliance with the standards set. In this Region there are currently 69 designated bathing beaches and sampling records, results of which are held by the Agency and local authorities, are available to members of the public. Bathing beaches in Southern Region are indicated on Figure 3 from Bathing Water Quality In England and Wales in 1996 – A summary report.¹⁴

Agency Activities

River catchments are divided into river stretches which are maintained regularly for different chemical and physical characteristics. Each stretch has been set a River Quality Objective (RQO) dependent upon the river use of the stretch. These RQOs form the basis for both maintaining and improving river quality and underpin water quality planning. Biological monitoring includes sampling and identification of invertebrates to give an indication of water quality to complement chemical testing. The Agency responds to pollution incidents such as spillages of oil or other chemicals.

A hotline number is available to report any such incidents:

Environment Agency Emergency
Hotline 0800 80 70 60

Free line, 24 hours a day, 7 days
a week.

Recommendations

- Promote and encourage recreation participants to notify the Agency of any pollution incidents.
- To collect detailed information of sites used by recreation users.

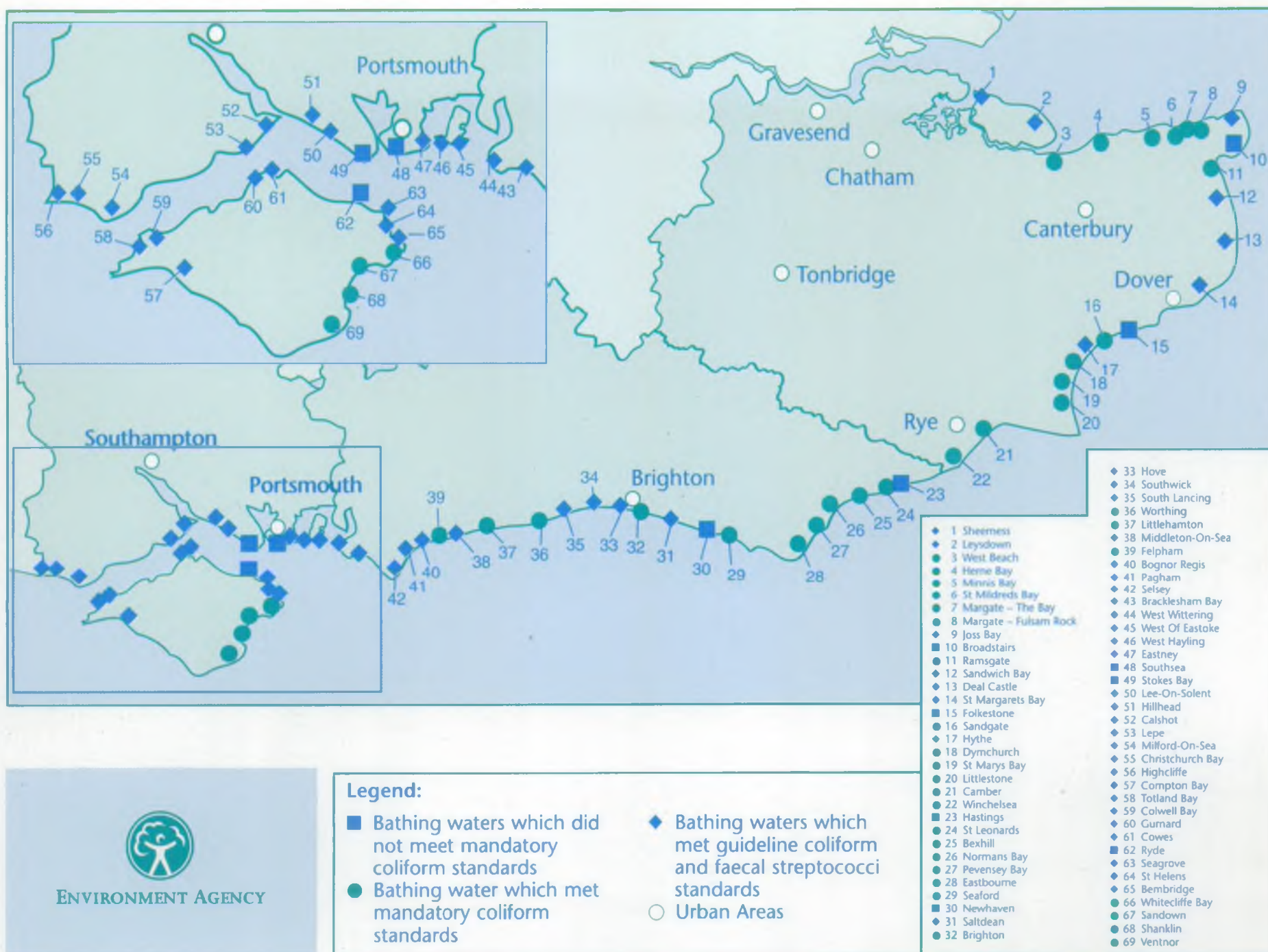
5.3.4 Monitoring of Recreation sites in Southern Region

In addition to the Agency's statutory duties for sampling EC designated bathing beaches, additional monitoring has been carried out at a number of non-coastal sites identified for recreational use.¹⁵ This data allows the Agency to respond to requests for information from local authorities and is also available to the public.



The sampling of designated bathing waters takes place during summer months, from May to September. However water sports and other water based recreational activities occur for a greater part of the year with opportunities provided by wet and dry suits, and on a wide range of waters across the Region, including inland sites, many of these falling outside the EC Bathing Water Directive.

Figure 3 Southern Region Bathing Waters 1996



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

5.3.5 Classification of waters for recreation

In the late eighties and early nineties the National Rivers Authority, amongst other organisations, became involved in research into the development of a system for the classification of waters for recreation. This was done in preparation for the possible introduction of a national classification system and Statutory Water Quality Objectives for recreation sites. Although, the Government decided not to proceed with such measures, the initial research undertaken provides useful research for those involved in managing water related recreation.

5.3.6 Beach Awards

A number of awards are given to beaches based on a number of different criteria, these may be awarded by the Tidy Britain Group (TBG), an independent pressure group, or by local authorities. There are a large number of award schemes which may confuse recreation participants. Clarity is needed on the variety of awards available and the requirements of each. Two awards are outlined below which have a requirement for water quality standards to be met, applications for these awards are made to the Tidy Britain Group.

The European Blue Flag Scheme

The European Blue Flags are awarded to high quality EC beaches that meet the water quality and additional land based requirements of the award scheme. Water quality must meet the higher "guideline" microbiological criteria set out in the EC Directive. The land-based requirement includes criteria such as facility provision such as toilets, first aid, cleanliness and information displayed.

The Tidy Britain Group Seaside Award Scheme

The Seaside Award is also administered by the TBG and is intended to complement the European Blue Flag Scheme outlined above. This scheme recognises beaches which attain mandatory coliform standards, in addition to provision facilities of high standards and beach cleanliness. The land based criteria are of higher standard than those required for the Blue Flag designation. The Seaside award is given for both 'Resort' and 'Rural' beaches with different compliance levels for each.

Recommendation

- *Responsible bodies should work together to clarify information on beach awards, including Blue flag and local authority awards.*



5.3.7 Future Improvements in Water Quality

Under its statutory remit the Agency in Southern Region works with the water companies responsible for waste water treatment and other industries to bring about improvements in the quality of water in rivers, estuaries and around the coast. Most significant for the future of Water Quality in the Region is the EC

UWWTD Directive. The EC UWWTD sets out the appropriate levels of treatment for urban waste waters, the level of treatment being dependent upon the nature of the receiving water, receiving water sensitivity and discharge size. It is aimed that under this directive the quality of waste water entering rivers and estuaries will improve.

Although the statutory deadlines for implementation of this directive are still some way off, many schemes in Southern Region are scheduled to be operational much sooner thus bringing about earlier improvements in water quality for the benefit of, recreation and general aesthetics.

Without any Statutory Water Quality Objectives for recreation the emphasis must be on raising awareness among participants about the potential health risks involved in various water related activities and any relevant precautionary measures. Many governing bodies, water activity centres and clubs already provide guidance to users about water quality and health risks as well as advice to members about Leptospirosis and illnesses associated with blue-green algae blooms.

5.3.8 Litter and 'Fly-tipping'

The presence of litter left directly on and adjacent to rivers and the sea presents a risk to recreation users. The inappropriate disposal of 'personal items' such as sanitary towels, condoms, needles and razor blades which are flushed down the toilet and end up indirectly in the environment also cause problems to recreation users. There have been a number of initiatives to reduce litter in and around water such as the leaflets produced by The National 'Bag it & Bin

It' group. The Agency has no responsibility for litter or 'fly-tipping', this is the responsibility of the local authorities. Countryside Projects may carry out actions to reduce or remove litter as they are often funded by the local authorities in addition to the Agency. The Medway River Project received the Queen Mothers Birthday Award, Premier Award for Enterprise in 1994-95 mainly for work in removal of litter.



'Navigate with Nature' is a joint initiative between the British Marine Industries Federation (BMIF) and Environmental Development (UK CEED), aimed at promoting responsible boating for the protection of the environment and intends to aid the reduction of litter to coastal waters from boats. This project was launched in Poole Harbour in 1996 and is likely to be extended to other boating areas such as the Solent.

Recommendations

- *Codes of Conducts for recreation users should cover protection of the environment to reduce litter.*
- *Clubs and organisations should be encouraged to undertake action to remove litter from recreation locations.*

PRINCIPLES

1. The Agency, under its statutory remit, will continue to work with relevant organisations including the water companies and industry to maintain and where possible bring about improvements in the quality of water in still waters, rivers, estuaries and around the coast.
2. Responsible agencies, including local authorities, governing bodies and the Agency, should work together to promote the distribution of water quality information to recreational users and the public, where water quality is relevant to the activity.

Giant hogweed can reach heights of 3 to 5 metres. "The hollow stems are attractive to children who use them as 'pea shooters' and 'telescopes'. However, it should not be touched without wearing protective clothing because the plant produces large volumes of sap which, on contact with skin, and in the presence of sunlight, causes severe irritation, swelling and painful blistering".¹⁶

A free guidance booklet is available from the Agency giving information on distribution and identification and control of invasive plants.

Giant hogweed is present on river banks and other wetland areas and can be a hazard to recreation users in these areas, both to land based activities and at points of access for water based activities. Large sections of land adjacent to rivers is in private ownership and there is no requirement for control of Giant hogweed to be carried out. An area of the upper River Arun, Baldings Brook, has been surveyed for Giant hogweed as part of a collaborative project with Horsham District Council and the Agency. Control of giant hogweed has been carried out in the study area with subsequent monitoring.

5.4 Water Safety

5.4.1 Hazardous plants – Giant Hogweed

A number of non-native plants have been introduced to Britain, a few of which have become aggressively dominant, creating serious problems in some areas. Giant Hogweed is one of these plants which not only shades out native plants and provides a poor habitat for insects, birds and mammals, but in addition poses a serious health hazard.

5.4.2 Safety Initiatives

One safety initiative recently set up is the Boat Safety Scheme. The Boat Safety Scheme is a joint initiative between British Waterways and the Agency with an emphasis on safety for boaters and others visiting rivers and canals and protection of the water environment. The scheme is to be implemented where British Waterways or the Agency are the navigation authority. In Southern Region

this is to be introduced on the Medway subject to changes in byelaw legislation.

Recommendation

- *Support initiatives aiming to improve safety for recreation users such as the Boat Safety Scheme.*

5.4.3 Awareness of Water Safety

The National Rivers Authority produced a number of publications aimed to improve water safety such as "Water Wisdom" produced with assistance from the Public Health Laboratory Service and the Department of Health. Issues include risks to participants from drowning. The CCPR (The Central Council of Physical Recreation) produce a leaflet with the Sports Council 'National Water Sports Code'³⁹ which covers common sense points to note for a variety of activities.

Recommendations

- *Ensure that all special events have written consent as required in line with local byelaws.*
- *Raise awareness of water safety issues by responsible bodies.*
- *Good codes of practice regarding water safety should be promoted through clubs and governing bodies. Additional ways to disseminate information to casual participants should be investigated.*

5.4.4 Multi-functional use of sites

The Agency and other organisations promote the multiple use of sites by different recreational users, where

appropriate. This raises the need for effective recreation management and for increased awareness of other users to reduce the potential for occurrence of accidents. This will be addressed in later sections for information and management of recreation.

PRINCIPLE

All users will be encouraged to act in a safe and responsible manner when on or near to water. All recreation users should be aware of safety regulations, local byelaws and Codes of practice produced by the Governing bodies of sport.

5.5 Access and facilities for recreation

The Agency has a general duty "to promote the use of inland and coastal waters and land associated with them for recreational purposes to the extent that it deems desirable." Access is generally needed to make use of water and associated land for recreational activities. The Agency encourages opportunities for recreation provision such as those made through voluntary access agreements with landowners.

5.5.1 Access and rights of way

Access to water and land associated with water varies greatly in urban, rural, coastal and inland settings. Land use such as for flood defence purposes, landownership and various designations relating to archaeology, history, landscape or conservation are all factors which influence the suitability

of sites for both informal recreation and more formal sports and activities.

There are parts of the Region that come under intense pressure from informal uses, particularly affected is the countryside in urban fringe areas which is easily available to large numbers of people. Other areas, available for recreational use, are under used because they are more remote and difficult to reach.

Where there are no existing rights of way landowners have no legal obligation to make private land available to the public. However, initiatives such as 'Access 2000' promoted by the Country Landowners Association (CLA), encourage landowners to make more land available for recreation, including waterside sites. Similarly, some agri-environmental schemes support the provision of land for recreation within an overall scheme. The benefits of these initiatives include the potential to reduce pressure on popular sites, the chance to secure long term access agreements for recreation and the opportunity to promote wider appreciation of the environment by providing quality sites for recreation.

The majority of visitors to the countryside and water areas, such as rivers, do so for the 'quiet enjoyment'.



Popular activities include health and fitness, art, photography and nature interest. There is a need for sites which can be enjoyed in an informal way with little or no apparent visitor management and these should be recognised. Access everywhere is not appropriate and identification of these areas is as important as those which need management and provision of recreation facilities. The Sports Council statement "Access for all, but not everywhere" can be used as a useful summary.

In addition to the impact on sites and wildlife, there is a need to recognise and take into account other factors when promoting recreation such as a need for parking, impact on local communities, accessibility for all abilities, proximity to public transport, and further opportunities for the local population.



The Agency can contribute to the provision of better opportunities for informal recreation in part through management of its own sites and by working with other organisations to promote existing routes. Sixty four Agency sites in Southern Region currently have public rights of access. The Agency will encourage the creation of further access opportunities for waterside and water based recreation.

Access to recreational opportunities is recognised as an important factor in

contributing to the quality of peoples lives. It should be an aim of all those involved in providing for recreation to ensure that factors which might affect peoples ability make use of recreational opportunities in their area and are taken into account in planning provision, creating new opportunities and making better use of existing resources.

Availability of opportunity for all forms of recreation in all parts of the Region may not be appropriate or desirable for a variety of reasons, including the sensitive nature of some sites; land owner requirements, the incompatibility of some activities and the particular locational requirements of some activities. However, the principle of equality of opportunity for all sectors of the community should be an underlying theme of activities of the key providers in the Region.

Recommendations

- *Further opportunities for recreation activities should be pursued as part of voluntary agreements with landowners in initiatives such as Countryside Stewardship, Access 2000 and Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) where appropriate. The Agency endorses the use of voluntary access agreements as an effective means of achieving the shared use of rivers and encourages their use.*
- *Review recreation provision within the Region to identify quiet areas and areas where further provision of recreational activity is desirable and possible.*

5.5.2 Use of public footpaths by non permitted users, eg cyclists, horse riders

Rights of way such as footpaths and bridle ways are the responsibility of local authorities. These are sometimes used inappropriately by non permitted users. A number of publications are produced regarding use of footpaths, bridle ways and byways.

Recommendation

- *Local authorities to further promote information regarding correct use of rights of way*

5.5.3 Equality of opportunity for access

Different members of the community have different recreational needs. Some of these needs are determined by age or physical ability. Research undertaken by the Fieldfare Trust, a charitable organisation specialising in disability and countryside recreation, indicates that information is a key factor in the provision of opportunities for people with disabilities. It is a common misperception amongst recreation providers that the needs of disabled visitors must always be met through the provision of specialist facilities such as handrails, ramps and tarmacadam surfacing. Frequently, what is needed above all else is clear, accurate information about facilities and site conditions to enable all potential visitors to make an informed decision about whether a particular site meets their recreational needs.

The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people in the provision of

services and facilities. The Act does not require new facilities to be created for disabled people; it is about making facilities already provided accessible to all. Where access for recreational purposes is actively promoted it is likely that the Act will become applicable. The full implications of the Act for the Agency and other recreation providers in the Region are not yet fully clear. The Agency's Recreation duty already requires the Agency to take the needs of chronically sick and disabled into account and this duty may be seen to be reinforced by the Act. How best to meet the requirements of the Act is being considered by the Agency at a national level¹⁶. There are, however, opportunities for Southern Region, together with other recreation providers, to begin immediately to explore ways of complying with Act to promote greater access to recreation for all sectors of the community. In doing this, consultation with disabled organisations is essential and should be seen as a first step in meeting the requirements of the Act. The Fieldfare Trust, supported by the English Sports Council, has produced a "Countryside Factfile for people with disabilities" in Southern Region¹⁷. This publication gives location of clubs and facilities available with a particular focus on accessible features. In Southern Region the Medway River Project has been involved in a number of projects to provide further opportunities for disabled

people, such as fishing pegs and disabled access trail on the River Medway near Teston, fishing platforms at Brooklands Lake, Snodland, and the production of a Disabled Access Strategy, which identified provision of access for the less-able at sites along the Medway Catchment. A National Research and Development project addresses the needs of disabled people in relation to water related activities.

5.5.4 Facilities and access points

Slipways, launching sites and other access points on the coast or inland are the basic facilities upon which much water recreation is dependent and as such are a focus point for activity. Additional facilities such as toilets, showers and car parking may also be needed depending on the activity. Day visitors, for example, may require toilets and the availability of refreshments, whilst other activities such as sailing may need provisions such as trailer parking and availability of fresh water to clean equipment.

Information about the use, condition and management of these facilities is not complete for all parts of the Region. However, it is clear that some sites are in a poor state of repair, particularly on some tidal rivers and coastal sites. There is inadequate provision for users in addition to constrained times of use due to tides resulting in pressure and sometimes user conflict at popular launch sites. Management of recreation users through access points is discussed in Section 5.7.

The need for improved public access to the coast has been identified from users by the questionnaire survey.

The English Sports Council Coastal Strategy 1989 also identifies the need for improved public access to the coast.

Recommendations

- To seek and encourage further access point for recreation opportunities to the coast.
- To bring all the public launch sites in the Region to an acceptable standard of repair.



5.5.5 Location and Design

Facilities need to be designed according to the location such as urban or rural environments. Information regarding the design of facilities can be obtained from a number of different sources such as the Handbook for Sport publication from the English Sports Council and advice from Sports Council Officers. The National Rivers Authority Recreation Facility Design Manual¹⁹ includes information for a variety of structures, surfaces and specialist items.

It should be noted that the Agency should be contacted regarding any proposals for constructions on, over, under or adjacent to rivers as consent



may be required, in addition to any planning permission, for works under the Land Drainage Act 1979 and Southern Region Land Drainage Byelaws, 1991.



5.5.6 Public use of facilities

Facilities may be public and used by individuals and recreational organisations, they may be privately owned and used exclusively by particular user groups or they may be privately owned and made available for use by the public. Provision of facilities for public use is encouraged by the Agency and for proposals seeking lottery funding there is a requirement for facilities to be available to the public

Recommendations

- *To encourage clubs to make provision for public access and to manage specialist facilities.*
- *Customer research should be carried out where possible to identify needs for facility provision.*

5.5.7 Cost of provision

In general, provision of free facilities and access for recreation is desirable. However charging for the use of facilities often means that better standards can be offered. The Agency and English Sports

Council support the view that where specialist facilities are provided, users should be prepared to pay for their use.

5.5.8 Transport to facilities

A number of alternative transport opportunities in the Region include the Chichester Ferry linking Itchenor to Bosham. More sustainable methods of transport, as an alternative to the car, including cycling, walking, use of boats and public transport should be used. The use of cycles or public transport may not be appropriate for all recreation activities for example where large items of equipment such as sailboards or canoes need to be transported. However many activities such as day trips may make use of public transport routes.

5.5.9 Information on facilities

A survey of recreation in Chichester harbour,²⁰ land and water has been carried out for Chichester Harbour Conservancy, sponsored by SE Regional Sports Council which provides information on facilities, slipways and car parking. It is intended that a collation of available recreation publications for the area covered by the Medway Estuary and Swale Management Plan⁴ in North Kent is to be carried out supported by the English Sports Council. It is often not a lack of provision of facilities that is an issue but rather the failure to provide existing and potential users with the relevant information.

Recommendations

- *New facilities should be promoted and provided where identified as necessary.*
- *A Region wide overview of existing launch points, their condition, use, availability and cost should be undertaken, linking with all existing available information.*
- *Signing at slipways and launch site should be seen as opportunities to manage recreational use and to guide and inform users.*
- *A list of available references for facility design should be compiled, updated and made available. Good design should be promoted in line with the Recreation Facility Design Manual.*
- *Wherever new facilities are proposed, the management should be clearly stated and agreed by relevant parties.*
- *New ways to disseminate information to users should be investigated in particular to casual participants.*



PRINCIPLES:

1. Visitor facilities should be promoted as they are an integral part of many recreation activities. Facilities should be located appropriately and where possible should be encouraged in areas where there is existing development, in keeping with the local landscape characteristics and away from sensitive nature conservation sites.
2. The significance of slipways and launch sites as key recreational facilities should be recognised. Existing access facilities should be protected and appropriate provision of new facilities encouraged.
3. In the location of new recreational facilities, consideration should be given to schemes which are accessible by modes of transport other than personal car such as cycling, walking and public transport, including bus, rail and ferries.
4. Use should be made where possible of existing customer research data and further recreation studies should be promoted.
5. The provision of facilities such as fishing pegs for angling and visitor moorings are supported in principle. These should be constructed in appropriate areas following a strategic approach. Where Agency consent is required consideration will be made on a site by site basis and provision may not be appropriate everywhere.
6. Increased opportunities for informal and formal recreational activities

should be promoted, where desirable, by organisations such as the Agency, local authorities and other relevant organisations working together with landowners.

7. Provision of disabled access will be made where appropriate in consultation with relevant representatives for disabled people. Suitability of areas for access will be assessed on a site by site basis and will not be promoted where safety of users will be compromised.
8. The Agency will support the creation of further access opportunities for waterside and water based recreation. The Agency endorses and encourages the use of voluntary access agreements as an effective means of achieving the shared use of waters.

5.6 Information and Education

5.6.1 Information and education for recreation users

Information about recreation opportunities is a key factor in determining where people go to take part in sport and recreation and the nature of the activities they participate in. Information can be used as a management tool to both promote and control activity. Providing information about how and where to take part in recreation is as important in creating equality of opportunity as the actual provision of facilities themselves.

Information about levels of recreational activity and the location of facilities and sites is needed to enable those involved in providing recreation opportunities to plan and manage their resources effectively. Education regarding recreation and environmental management should be available to all and not just young people.

5.6.2 Existing education initiatives

Environmental education is carried out by a large number of organisations in addition to formal training in schools. The Agency has recently published a leaflet entitled 'Grassroots'²¹ which sets out Education aims for the Agency and has appointed a Regional Education co-ordinator with a Regional Education Group to guide Agency education activities.

The English Sports Council focuses on the introduction of young people to sporting activities, working with clubs, governing bodies and schools through the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum includes an option for outdoor activities which can include water based recreation.



Existing work in education by the Agency has involved collaborative projects with organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts via WATCH groups, local authorities and school groups directly. Examples include production of information and activity packs such as 'Exploring the North Kent Marshes' for teachers and pupils, 'Green Link' in Sussex, and Low Tide Day activities.



Green Link is an Environmental Award scheme which was launched by the Agency in 1996/97 in East and West Sussex. These awards followed on from the Waterwise Awards run by the National Rivers Authority. The awards offer an opportunity for Sussex schools to carry out practical projects and raise awareness of their local environment; these are currently being extended across the Region. 'Green Goals', a similar initiative, has recently been set up in Kent Agency Area.

In addition to collaborative projects the Agency undertakes a number of other education activities such as giving talks to school groups and other interest groups, supervision of work placements, provision of information and exhibitions at public events.

A large number of organisations provide information leaflets for recreation, including the Countryside River Projects supported by the Agency, local authorities and other organisations. The

type of information available ranges from details of recreation clubs and activity centres to information regarding self guided river walks and nature trails.

Water sports activity centres also provide environmental education for participants involved in sporting activities. These are addressed further in Section 6.17.

Recommendations

- *Countryside River Projects supported by the Agency and other organisations produce a large number of advisory leaflets, lists of these should be compiled, regularly updated and utilised more widely.*
- *Investigate further opportunities for dissemination of information, including possible INTERNET Recreation Web Site.*
- *Provide recreation input into education and assessment of the requirements of target audiences.*
- *Need to provide education materials on integrated water and environmental management linked with Agency functions to complement specialist education provided by other organisations.*
- *Continue to carry out educative and informative activities such as Green Link, across the Region.*
- *Produce materials relevant to the National Curriculum and promote increased consultation on fact sheets and other education material with Area Agency staff and external organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts and NAEF (National Association of Environmental Education).*

5.6.3 Interpretation at sites

Consideration should be given to the way in which information for users and visitors is provided at recreation sites. Adequate planning of recreation sites is required to ensure that an appropriate number of signs is provided. Signs in a good state of repair showing clear, relevant information are needed. Signs should clearly state key messages about the site to enhance the users recreation experience.

The purpose of any on-site recreation information should be to guide and inform the visitor, either for their own safety; to increase their enjoyment or to raise awareness about the nature of the site. The location of site information, its purpose, its target audience and its relation with any other signs should be considered. Where visitor safety is concerned, or where directional information is required, standard, widely recognised symbols should be used.

Interpretation boards and signs may not be appropriate or required at all sites and it should be recognised that recreation management may not be needed at all sites.



Recommendations

- Information at recreation sites should be appropriately located; clear in its purpose and target audience; and, where relevant, standard widely recognised symbols should be used. Guidance will be provided for the Agency through the Agency signing manual.
- If interpretation signs are thought to be appropriate it is recommended that boards or panels should follow the guidelines below:

Interpretation board guidelines

- i. Be in keeping with the surrounding environment and landscape. Where possible be constructed from locally available materials making use of local trade, such as coppiced woodland crafts, or stonework.
- ii. Have provision for dual or multi-language boards where appropriate eg especially in Kent and other coastal areas with connections with the rest of Europe.
- iii. Make provision for information for blind or partially sighted people.
- iv. Be at heights suitable for use by children and people using wheelchairs.
- v. Be in accordance with National Agency guidelines.
- vi. Be visible from the water, where appropriate

5.6.4 Communication between providers and managers of recreation

Currently in Southern Region, a wide range of organisations provide information on recreational opportunities to the general public. The same organisations are collecting information for planning and management purposes. These organisations include the English Sports Council Governing bodies of sport, the local authorities and also the Agency. An opportunity exists for these organisations to coordinate their activities by sharing existing information databases and collaborating in the provision of information to the public. In doing this, duplication of effort may be avoided and resources may be redirected to the development of new initiatives. For example, the distribution of recreation information through the use of the Internet and other computer based media.

Estuary management plan projects have played an important role in bringing together organisations, with economic, social and environmental interests to promote better understanding. eg



Medway Estuary and Swale Management Plan and the Solent Forum.

The coordination of efforts and the sharing of expertise in collecting information such as supply and demand data, is important to achieve efficient use and application of resources.

Recommendations

- *The Agency will encourage closer working relationships with organisations concerned to meet, discuss and understand each others requirements, issues and concerns and to help achieve consensus on the way forward. Improved relationships will increase co-ordination and help identify opportunities on which to collaborate.*
- *Agency attendance at Groups set up to aid management in recreation such as proposed Kent Recreation Sub Group to aid in the delivery of the Kent Countryside Strategy led by Kent County Council, and other groups and fora including the River Arun Working Group.*
- *There is a need to co-ordinate and link education activities externally between other organisations involved with the provision of environmental education.*
- *Investigation of further use of the Agency's Recreation database with possible links with other organisations.*

5.6.5 Promotion of recreation within the Agency

There is a need to promote the recreation duties further within the Agency. This will be achieved partly through the production of this strategy and subsequent consultation. A recreation reference manual is to be produced by the Agency nationally to guide recreation work carried out.

Recommendations

- *Ensure that 'best practice' experiences are disseminated to other Agency areas and to investigate ways to improve dissemination of information within the Agency.*
- *Recreation reference manual should be promoted and be made available to all Agency staff.*
- *Need for effective training for staff with recreation responsibilities.*

5.6.6 Research and Development

Research and Development (R&D) has been identified in a number of sections of this strategy, to aid recreation management and benefit users. Research may be carried out by student placements in the Agency or through the Agency's national Research and Development programme.



Recommendations

- *Encourage placement of students with background training in countryside/coastal recreation to carry out projects such as river recreation studies.*
- *Continue to carry out Recreation Research and Development and make others aware of research initiatives and findings.*



PRINCIPLES:

1. Relevant organisations should seek to raise awareness and keep recreation participants better informed.
2. Relevant organisations should adopt a coordinated approach to the provision of information.
3. The Agency and other organisations will aim to provide a greater understanding of recreation as an integral part of environmental education and environmental issues by, working in partnership with other relevant organisations.
4. Education material for young people will be linked to the National Curriculum.

5.7 Water Recreation Management

5.7.1 Managing the recreational resource

Protecting the environment, making best use of the available resource and resolving conflicts between different interests are all dependent on successful management. In Southern Region there are many examples of good practice in recreation management of formal and informal water related recreation.

5.7.2 Successful Management through Consultation and User Participation

The existing and end users, the visitors and participants, are the most important part of recreation management and yet are sometimes overlooked by recreation planners and managers. Responses to the Agency's recent water based recreation survey indicate that considerable scope exists for more consultation with users and visitors to ensure that management practices are meeting real needs and that resources are accurately targeted. Where users form a recognisable club or contact group this may be easily achieved. Where a site is used for more informal recreation consulting with visitors may be more difficult but should still be considered worthwhile as effective consultation benefits both users and managers and is often the key to resolving management issues.

Water areas have a variety of different demands made on them from a range of interests. This sometimes results in conflicts between recreational users and commercial activities or those seeking to protect wildlife and nature conservation interests. Conflicts may be easily resolved

through negotiation and the application of good management techniques. Clubs and users are generally the best regulators of their own activities and the governing bodies of sport frequently issue guidance and codes of conduct to members to help address such problems. Langstone Harbour is one example in the Region of user consultation developing into user participation in site management, where the waterski club both police and manage water skiing within the harbour area.

Resolving conflicts between different recreation users is discussed above, however, it is notable that users on the River Stour including the Downstream Interests Group and Angling Clubs have come together to resolve some of their differences through discussions and public meetings and this approach to conflict resolution is welcomed by the Agency. Slightly further afield on the River Thames, a series of River User Groups, (RUGs), provide a useful forum for representatives of different groups to discuss issues and areas of potential concern. The Agency's Area Environment Groups (AEGs) provide a local forum for issues arising from such groups. For the statutory Navigation responsibilities of the Harbour of Rye, the Agency has a specific advisory user committee the Harbour of Rye Advisory Committee (HORAC) to assist in its management of these valuable waters. In addition the Medway River Users Association (MRUA) is an independent committee which assists in the management of the Medway.

The Agency also has a role to play in assisting to 'mediate' to help resolve areas of conflict where Agency interests are involved and is currently working with the British Canoe Union (BCU),

Country Landowners Association (CLA), National Farmers Union (NFU), riparian landowners and the National Federation of Anglers (NFA) to develop a joint access guide for anglers, canoeists and landowners.

5.7.3 Access Control

Access points are an important issue in recreation management and the control of these is frequently the key to successful management of informal and formal recreation sites. Signs and other forms of information, and physical structures such as gates and stiles enable managers to guide and influence users, controlling different uses of a site or facility. An example is on the Swale, North Kent where specific water based activities are required to use different access points to the water.⁴ This reduces congestion at launching sites and avoids potential conflict between different activities.

5.7.4 Zoning

The division of water areas into zones for different activities is widely practised across the Region and as a management technique is often highly successful. However, indications are that this type of zoning is most successful where there is a regular management presence. This is achieved through on site managers, visits by regular patrols or by management through a particular user group. Without some form of policing, zoning can be easily abused and although it is usually a minority of participants who ignore boundaries, wildlife can be disturbed and others users can be disturbed or put at risk by such behaviour.

Seasonal or temporal zoning of activities can be easier to manage and is often a

successful way of sharing a limited resource. For example, a water area of significance for overwintering birds may have the potential for summer use by windsurfers or sailors. Similarly, club angling waters that are used primarily at weekends may be suitable for use by school groups for a whole range of activities during the week making full use of what is, in this Region, a scarce resource, namely enclosed still waters, and at the same time possibly generating additional income for site managers.

Different waters can be used for different interests, and it must be accepted that all activities will not be appropriate on all sites.

Recommendations

- *The Agency will continue to contribute to the mediation of conflicts between relevant users of the water environment.*
- *Employ access controls and zoning to maximise the enjoyment of the water environment.*
- *Consideration should be given to the establishment of river user groups where necessary across the region to act as a contact point for Agency consultations and to reduce conflict between different interest groups.*

PRINCIPLE

Appropriate management techniques should be employed, involving both users and managers, to mitigate the effects of recreational pressure and enhance recreation experiences.

5.8 Agency Sites

The Agency is responsible for more than 500 sites in Southern Region. Although the functions of the Agency relate to inland water bodies, rivers and coastal waters and defences these are in general not owned by the Agency.

Many of the sites owned by the Agency are small and may consist of bore holes or gauging stations and have no recreational interest. There are however, more than 80 sites of recreational value ranging in size from small gauging stations with adjacent public footpaths to the 60 hectares of Park Wood in East Sussex and Ruxley Pits in Kent. Recreational activities on Agency sites are varied but focus usually on angling, walking and informal recreation.

Management of Agency sites and promotion of recreation where desirable is a priority for the Agency. Access for recreation will be promoted where it does not conflict with the operational needs or safety requirements of the site, in balance with other interests.

The Agency has undertaken a review of all land holding documents for sites owned to assess existing and potential conservation and recreation interest. Further consideration of recreation potential of Agency sites has been carried out in different ways in each area of Southern Region. In Sussex Area, a Site Assessment Assistant has been responsible for producing a number of site management plans and promoting improvements of sites through modifications in site maintenance contracts. In Kent Area, visits have been made to Agency sites to assess potential for recreation interest. This has been carried out on a catchment basis and will allow prioritisation to be made for manage-

ment of the sites and the production of site management plans. It is intended that Agency sites in Hampshire will also be reviewed for recreation to assess priority sites for management. It is essential that Agency sites are prioritised for management and that costs for management are assessed and taken into consideration to maximise use of resources and benefits on the ground.

5.8.1 Agency sites managed for recreation

This section includes examples of significant Agency owned sites in the Region currently in use for recreation.



Kent Area

In Kent Area examples of significant sites in use for recreation include Ruxley Pits, Harbour of Rye, Rye Harbour Nature Reserve and Woodleas.

Ruxley Gravel Pits

Ruxley gravel pits are one of the few areas of relatively undisturbed open water in Greater London, south of the

Thames. The site comprises four gravel pits with patches of fen vegetation surrounded by the narrow fringe of dry land and is designated as a SSSI for its increasingly diverse range of plants and animals.

The fishing rights to the lakes are leased from the Environment Agency and are fished throughout the year. Through close liaison with English Nature, the Kent Wildlife Trust who manage the site and the Agency, angling activities are managed to minimise any adverse impacts on the special interest of the site.

Woodleas Conservation Area

Woodleas is an area of open water surrounded by grassland and scrub and is managed as a conservation area for wildlife. It was created in 1989 on former agricultural land as part of the Ashford Flood Alleviation scheme. A public footpath runs along the southern boundary of the site. This is partially screened from the main part of the site by landscaping and scrub and offers good opportunities for bird watching.

Harbour of Rye

The Harbour of Rye is owned and managed by the Agency which is also the Harbour Authority. Rye is a historic sea port situated on the mouth of the Eastern Rother in East Sussex, which became the seventh Cinque Port in the Fourteenth Century.

The Harbour Master and Deputy Harbour Master both act to manage and control the harbour, controlling and regulating shipping and other river traffic to ensure safety of navigation and to balance river usage for all Harbour users. This is carried out through a number of

activities. A Pilotage service is provided to comply with statutory responsibilities of Competent Harbour Authority. Local and navigational advice is also given to harbour users and interested parties to promote safety awareness and promote the interests of the Harbour. A free publication 'Mariner's Guide to Rye'²² is available from the Agency.

Facilities available at the Harbour of Rye include moorings, electricity, toilet and shower facilities, boat waste reception facilities and fresh water. Moorings are available in Rye Town itself at Strand Quay for craft up to 15 metres and for larger craft up to 25 metres near to the Harbour Office. Harbour charges are collected by the Harbour Master and Deputy.

The Harbour of Rye has some commercial activity including commercial fisheries. Recreation activities include dinghy sailing, yachting, water skiing and informal enjoyment of the harbour and its surroundings. Water skiing activity is carried out from the railway bridge to Star Lock, and this site is considered as one of the main areas for water skiing in the Region, being used at times of high water. Other recreational activity is carried out by Rye Sailing Club and Rye Harbour Boat Owners Club with which the Harbour closely liaises. Jetskiing in the harbour is an issue and this activity is presently restricted above the harbour slipway for safety of users.

The Harbour of Rye lies in an area which is of particular importance for its nature conservation value designated as Rye Harbour Nature Reserve SSSI, SPA, Ramsar and part SAC. Interests must not only be balanced between recreational users but with the wildlife interests of the area. Issues have arisen over conflict of

use of areas of saltings or saltmarsh for recreation and Agency activity.

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve is managed by a warden from the Sussex Wildlife Trust. This includes a section of land owned by the Agency. Much of the recreation carried out within the reserve is associated with informal enjoyment of the area with activities such as bird and nature watching.



An Agency access track is present through the reserve which is used by Agency vehicles when carrying out essential Flood Defence beach feeding activities. This track is not a public right of way but is open for use by walkers and cyclists only when there is no operational activity for safety reasons. Opportunities for an interpretation centre for the reserve are presently being investigated.

Sussex Area

In Sussex examples of significant sites in use for recreation include Park Wood, Pagham Harbour Nature Reserve, Barcombe Mills, Ferring Rife and Rowner Mill.

Pagham Harbour

Pagham Harbour is a Local Nature Reserve, and designated SSSI, SPA and Ramsar site. The reserve is managed by warden and assistant education warden for West Sussex County Council. The reserve is used extensively for a variety of informal recreation activities such as walking and bird watching, with access via public footpaths, designated trails and Crown foreshore land.

Park Wood

Park Wood is an area of ancient woodland with chestnut and hornbeam trees. It is a designated SNCI. A part-time warden is present on the site funded through collaboration with the Agency and East Sussex County Council. Informal recreation activities occur at the site such as walking and bird watching. Provision has also been made for wheelchair access and car parking.

Hampshire Area

Isle of Wight

In Hampshire Area Agency owned land includes sections of disused railway track on the Isle of Wight. A collaborative project is proposed with the Isle of Wight Council following a feasibility study and on-going consultation with relevant landowners to create a formal cycle route along the disused railway line from Newport to Sandown.

Recommendation

- Complete review of Agency sites for recreational potential and assess associated management costs.

PRINCIPLE

The Agency will endeavour to demonstrate best practice in the environmental management of its own sites, including preparation of management plans for best sites.

5.8.2 Multiple use of sites – Opportunity for all

The Agency aims to promote multiple use of sites where appropriate. It is recognised that recreation may not be appropriate on all sites due to other interests or constraints such as safety or operational requirements. Multiple use of sites may not also be desirable everywhere as some activities such as water skiing may require exclusive use of a site or designated area.

The Agency recognises that affiliation of clubs to governing bodies is beneficial in a number of different ways such as benefits from third party insurance. However, generally affiliation to governing bodies will not be a pre-condition for clubs leasing Agency sites so that use is not restricted.

Recommendations

- *Subject to the particular circumstances of each site, multiple use of Agency owned sites will be encouraged and non conflicting access will generally be sought for several activities.*
- *Clubs leasing sites from the Agency for recreational activities will be encouraged to operate day ticket systems or similar arrangements to allow members of the public to take part in recreational activities on Agency sites.*
- *It is desirable for clubs to affiliate to governing bodies. However, affiliation to governing bodies of sport will not generally be a pre-condition for clubs leasing Agency sites although clubs should be required to carry public liability insurance and will be considered responsible for the safety of visitors to the site, other than from incidents arising out of the pre-existing condition of the land.*

partnership with other organisations. Guidance for eligibility criteria for projects has been produced nationally, but Agency Area offices may have additional criteria. There is a need for combined Regional checklist for projects.

Recommendation

- *That the National Eligibility criteria checklist is made available to external parties to assess potential collaborative projects for recreation.*

5.9.2 Flood Defence

The Flood Defence department of the Agency carries out a range of activities including dredging, weed cutting and pioneering works on designated lengths of rivers and other waterways in order to maintain channels and reduce flooding. Flood Defence also maintain lengths of coastal and tidal defences. These necessary operations often use heavy machinery and can have an effect on recreational activities such as angling and walking, through temporary closures of footpaths, or sections of beaches etc.

The Annual Flood Defence Maintenance Programme is drawn up early each year. This contains details of activities described above and stretches where they are to be carried out. The programme is discussed and agreed with the Area Conservation and Recreation Officers and then sent out for wider consultation with interested conservation organisations. In recent years consultation has included angling representatives in Kent Area.

PRINCIPLE

The Agency will promote recreational use of sites in its control where this will not conflict with the primary operational uses of the site and safety requirements.

5.9 Agency activities

5.9.1 Recreation

Collaborative projects are undertaken by the Agency's Fisheries, Ecology and Recreation (FER) department in



5.9.3 Recreational use of sea and tidal defences

The Agency is one of a number of organisations including local authorities and Internal Drainage Boards which carries out operations on river, tidal and coastal defences for flood defence purposes. Sea and tidal defences have a number of operational requirements for their maintenance and recreational activities, such as cycling, may interfere with operations, cause damage to flood banks or may present a risk to public safety. There is a need to investigate impacts of recreation on flood banks and to establish guidelines for appropriate recreational use to allow recreation to be promoted where appropriate. This is currently being addressed through the Agency's own research and development programme.

Recommendations

- *To investigate the impact of recreation on flood banks relating to riverine, estuarine and coastal waters and to establish guidelines for appropriate recreational use. To produce guidelines on design, construction, enhancement, mitigation and management for recreational use of flood banks.*
- *Recreation organisations are to be encouraged to provide detailed information regarding sites used to enable consultation on proposed works.*
- *Wider consultation on the Annual flood defence maintenance programme in the area to include recreation users in each Area.*

PRINCIPLES

1. Agency maintenance activities will be designed and programmed to minimise damage to recreational interests and will seek to achieve enhancements where practicable.
2. The Agency will support the use of flood defences for recreational activities, in principle, however these will not be permitted where it will affect the operational viability of the defence, where they are considered to cause an unsatisfactory level of damage to the integrity of the defences or where the safety of users is compromised.
3. Provision for disabled access will be made where appropriate on flood walls. However flood walls may not always be suitable for disabled access and assessment of suitability will be made on a site by site basis.

5.9.4 Capital schemes

Capital schemes are carried out by all functions of the Agency and may provide ideal opportunities for the provision of recreation facilities. A recent example is where recreation has successfully been incorporated into an Agency, Water Resources capital scheme on the River Medina at Shide, Isle of Wight. The scheme involved the demolition of an old concrete structure, previously used to measure river flows, and recycled materials were used to form a two stage river designed to benefit wildlife in addition to use of the redundant brick instrumentation hut being used as a roost for bats and barn owls. An interpretation board was designed and

installed to provide information for local walkers and cyclists who use the site.

5.9.3 Coastal processes

Natural coastal processes act to move sediment and other materials around the coast. In carrying out the Agency's statutory duties, activities such as those carried out by the Flood Defence department may affect the natural coastal processes which may alter conditions for recreation activities.

Work is carried out by the Agency to monitor the patterns of sediment movement around the coast to gain a better understanding of processes taking place. In carrying out coastal capital schemes Environmental Assessments are carried out which include coastal processes and possible changes.

Recommendation

- *Environmental Assessments for coastal capital works should include screening for potential impacts on recreational activities and where possible action taken to minimise the effects and identify recreational opportunities and enhancements.*

PRINCIPLE

The Agency has a duty to take account of recreation in all its functions. Opportunities for recreation provision will be highlighted at the earliest stage in Capital Scheme projects.



5.10 Countryside projects

A number of river and water related Countryside projects are supported by the Agency and other organisations in Southern Region.

Where Countryside projects have been set up with the Agency as one of the funding partners, valuable work for improvement and promotion of nature conservation and recreation has been carried out in river catchments. Countryside projects are seen to provide a valuable link to the local community.

A number of projects in the Region are listed below, although this list is not exhaustive.

5.10.1 Kent Area

Provision for Countryside River projects in Kent is extensive with the Agency contributing to the following projects:

North West Kent Countryside Project/ Darent Valley Enhancement Project, Medway River Project, Kentish Stour Countryside Project, Romney Marsh Countryside Project and the Cliffe Countryside Project.

There are an additional number of projects operating in Kent Area including the Rye Bay Project and White Cliffs Countryside project. There are also a number of AONB projects in Kent including the Kent High Weald Countryside Project.

5.10.2 Sussex Area

In general the rivers within Sussex Area have good provision of Countryside projects to carry out recreation work with local people. There are presently two River Countryside projects supported by the Agency and other organisations, namely the Ouse Valley Project and the

Arun Valley Project. The Cuckmere River falls within the Sussex Downs AONB and much of the nature conservation and recreation management and promotion is carried out through the Sussex Downs Conservation Board. The Western Rother in Sussex is an area of high conservation value and promotion of recreation is not set as a priority. In consideration of provision of a further countryside project in Sussex, the River Adur would be a priority continuing work of a project initiated in 1979.

5.10.3 Hampshire Area

In Hampshire there are the Isle of Wight AONB Project and the East Hampshire AONB Project which promote informal recreation activities. In addition the Solent Forum is also supported by the Agency to address economic, environmental and social issues. In consideration of a further countryside project in Hampshire, the Eastern Yar on the Isle of Wight would be considered.

Recommendation

- *Priority will be given to the River Adur, Sussex and Eastern Yar, Isle of Wight, in consideration of a further Countryside Projects in the Areas.*



PRINCIPLE

The Agency will seek to support Countryside Projects to improve and promote nature conservation and recreation on river catchments in the region where a need is identified.

5.11 Estuary and Harbour Management Plans

A number of Estuary Management Plans and Harbour plans have been produced and are on-going in the Region such as the Medway Estuary and Swale Management Plan, Medina Management plan and Langstone Harbour plan.

The Agency would not expect to lead on estuary or harbour plans unless it is the Harbour Authority, although recreation expertise will be offered where appropriate as part of a multi-functional Agency input.

PRINCIPLE

The Agency will assist with recreation input into Estuary Management Plans as they provide a good fora to discuss economic, environmental and social issues affecting estuarine and coastal areas.

5.12 Canals – management and restoration

Used mainly for informal recreational activities, the canals in the Region are a valuable resource.

5.12.1 Royal Military Canal

In Kent, the Royal Military Canal (RMC) is perhaps the best known and most extensively used. The RMC is unique

to Southern Region canals as it was originally built as a defensive structure, not a navigation. Today it is managed as an asset for recreation by a number of organisations including the Agency, Shepway District Council and the National Trust. As an historical structure, the canal is designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument and for its conservation interest part of the canal is designated SSSI and SNCI.



In a recent public enquiry, the Inspector found in favour of a continuous footpath along the length of one bank of the canal which will further extend its use for recreation. The Agency leases coarse fishing to angling clubs on sections of the canal and makes a limited number of permits available for canoeing. The possibility of further allowing a limited number of powered craft to navigate along the RMC should be investigated taking into account all other interests.

Current issues on the canal concern water quality, water supply and management. The canal acts as a drainage channel in wet weather and as a feeder in drier weather to maintain water levels in Romney and Walland Marshes. The management of the water supply to the canal results in variable water levels which affect the quality of the fishery and weed growth in the canal, and thus the angling interests. Weed is cut to increase the capacity of the canal for flood defence purposes

in a manner to sustain the fishery. The Agency is presently looking at the issue of water supply and management.

Recommendation

- *Review of RMC agreement to consider feasibility of powered craft in addition to manually propelled craft to navigate on the RMC.*

5.12.2 Thames and Medway Canal

The Thames and Medway Canal is a former navigation from Gravesend to the River Medway in Kent. Much of the canal is now derelict though a canal restoration association has been active for many years and has been able to restore some sections back to water. A partnership of organisations, including the Agency, supported the preparation of a feasibility study to look at restoring the canal to water. Issues include concerns over the structural integrity of the canal, the availability of a sustained water supply and the difficulty of disposing of the waste material, some of which is thought to be contaminated, currently infilling part of the original canal. A railway is constructed over the top of the eastern end and some development has occurred over sections at the western end near Gravesend. At the western end near Denton an open stretch of the canal is still present. The open stretch of canal at the western end has recently been extended by opening up an adjacent section of channel through the infill through an enhancement scheme.

5.12.3 Chichester Canal

In Sussex, the four miles of the Chichester Canal link the city with

Chichester Harbour. The Chichester Canal Society together with other partners has been active in restoring the canal to its present state where it provides a valuable recreational resource for the district. The canal is currently used by the Society's trip boat, canoeists and rowers. The canal towpath is fully open and is heavily used both by local people and visitors to the area. Angling is also provided for along much of the length of the canal and an active events programme ensures that the canal and its basin, near the centre of Chichester remain a focus for recreation in the area.

The restoration of the canal as a fully navigable waterway is supported by many agencies in the county. There are however, a number of issues which need to be addressed before this can be achieved: Two low level road crossings present major obstacles to navigation. These would need to be raised or replaced by removable bridges. The four locks on the canal also need restoring and the existing reeds beds, which provide a home for many wildlife species, would need to be replaced. Perhaps the biggest issues facing the restoration of



this canal is funding. Bids for lottery funding have so far been unsuccessful but even without navigation along its whole length the canal provides many recreational opportunities for anglers,

canoeists, cyclists, walkers and rowers. These activities and opportunities to promote them should continue to be explored alongside efforts to further open the canal to boat traffic.

5.12.4 Wey and Arun Canal

The Wey and Arun Canal formerly provided a navigable link between the River Wey, in Surrey, and the River Arun, in West Sussex. Today the canal is in multiple ownership and much of it has been infilled. The Wey and Arun Canal Trust have restored sections of the canal and the Wey South Path traces as far as possible the former route of the navigation. A trip boat operates on one of the restored sections of the canal and accessible reaches of the towpath are popular with walkers. The continuing restoration of the canal is dependent on the resolution of several major issues: the securing of adequate water supplies; the cooperation of landowners along the route, the possibilities for locating new routes for the canal where more recent

structures along its route cannot be relocated. All of the above are dependent on the availability funding and, like the Chichester Canal, the Wey and Arun has also been unsuccessful in a recent lottery application.

5.12.5 Itchen Navigation Canal

The Itchen Navigation Canal lies adjacent to the River Itchen from Winchester to Woodmill, Southampton. The Canal was originally built for navigation purposes and sections are currently used for rowing and canoeing activities. There is no public right of navigation on the canal. A long distance footpath the Itchen way traces the canal footpath.

5.12.6 Titchfield Haven Canal

This canal in Hampshire is situated adjacent to the River Meon. The canal was originally built for navigation purposes but now not used extensively for recreation activities.

Recommendation

- Support investigations of possible further use of the Titchfield Haven Canal for recreation, such as canoeing activities.

PRINCIPLE

Canals in the Region in their present state are recognised as a recreational resource and valuable green corridors. Canal restoration is supported in principle but the case of each canal needs to be assessed individually and support for additional restoration will be given providing aims are environmentally sustainable particularly in terms of water resources and subject to eligibility criteria for collaborative projects.



6. Recreation Activities Discussion

6.1 Walking

The Environment Committee Report on The Impact of Leisure Activities¹² states that walking is the commonest form of active recreation in the countryside. Most walking is short-distance and local with an increase in longer-distance walking. 216 Million visits (37 % of all visits) made were for walking or rambling, according to the UK Day visits survey, 1993.²³ 90 million visits were made to the seaside or coast.

Participation in walking may be part of club activities with organisations such as the Ramblers Association or of a more informal nature.

There are a number of River Valley Walks in the Region, some of which are promoted by the Countryside Projects and local authorities. These include the Medway Valley Walk, Stour Valley Walk in Kent and walks around inland water bodies such as Swanbourne Lake. Proposals for a walk adjacent to the Royal Military Canal have recently been accepted. A large number of guided walk leaflets related to the water environment, for inland and coastal waters, are currently available from a number of different sources. Long distance walking may also take place on National Trails in the Region and on the extensive Rights of Way network.



Recommendation

- A list of publications available for water related walks should be compiled and updated.

PRINCIPLE

Further opportunities should be sought and provision made to increase walking opportunities adjacent to inland and coastal waters.

but for game and coarse angling, perhaps the most reliable data can be found in the recent Agency rod licence sales figures: National statistics indicate that almost 1 million coarse fishing licences and 34,000 game licences were sold for the year 1995/96. A Review of angling carried out for the National Rivers Authority in 1994 indicated that the number of anglers who had been fishing in the preceding two years as 3.27 million.²⁴ Angling is a recreational activity which appeals to people from all social classes and to all ages.

The Agency is responsible for licensing and regulating coarse and game fishing. Fishing for sea fish does not require anglers to obtain a licence from the Agency. Participation may be as part of a club, competitive angling for specimen fish or quantity of fish, or as a popular

6.2 Angling

Angling is one of most popular outdoor pursuits in the UK and includes the disciplines of coarse, game and sea fishing. Estimates for actual numbers participating vary widely between sources



informal activity to enjoy the water side environment.

6.2.1 Provision in Southern Region

In Southern Region almost 75,000 coarse licences were sold and more than 2,000 people bought game licences, to fish for salmon and migratory trout, in 1995/96.²⁵

The number of coarse and game angling clubs gained from the Southern Region survey 1995/96 is as given below:

● Hampshire/Isle of Wight	24
● Sussex	63
● Kent	58

The figures above only partially illustrate the significance of angling activity in the Region. In addition many anglers travel from other parts of the country to take advantage of the fishing opportunities offered. This includes a significant weekend influx from outlying urban areas including London.

Commercial fisheries play a significant role in the provision of angling opportunities. There are forty three commercial coarse fisheries and thirty four commercial game fisheries in the Region. There are also many angling clubs offering season and day tickets to the casual angler visiting their waters.



6.2.2 Inland waters

The Region offers a vast range of fishing opportunities from the large slow waters of the Medway to the fast flowing chalk stream rivers of Hampshire. The rivers Test and Itchen in Hampshire are renowned for their trout fishing and the lower reaches of both are also notable salmon fisheries. Rivers in Sussex and Kent are better known for their coarse fisheries. There are also many still waters in the area which provide for both the game and coarse angler. Many of the headwater streams in the Region are known for their stocks of wild brown trout, while in the middle and lower river reaches, coarse fishing predominates. The Great Stour estuary in particular is nationally renowned for its coarse fishery. The Royal Military Canal and Wallers Haven are popular venues for match anglers. The majority of waters in the Region are managed by Angling Clubs with others operated as commercial day ticket waters.

Principle locations for coarse and game fishing are given in Appendices 3-8 for Hampshire, Sussex and Kent Areas, as obtained by the Agency Recreation Survey.

Recommendation

- *Promotion of coarse fishing particularly on common ponds in and around large areas of population.*

6.2.3 Beach and Sea angling

There are over 150 Sea Angling Clubs in Southern Region affiliated to the National Federation of Sea Anglers, NFSA. (NFSA, July 1997). The 1100 km of coastline in Southern Region provides

excellent facilities for the beach angler. The headlands, spits and points as well as harbour walls, piers and groynes are important features for land based sea anglers. Boat angling off the coast is also significant, ranging from the smallest of private boats to commercial charter vessels taking groups out to distant offshore 'marks'.

The Agency remit for coarse and migratory fish species means that less is known about beach and sea angling activities. In general access to the coast is easier than that to inland waters and rivers and usually there is no cost involved.



6.2.4 Public free fishing

A number of public or free fishing sites are provided in the Region. Free fishing waters are defined within this strategy as areas where fishing is permitted by the owner without the need for an angler to belong to a club or purchase a day fishing ticket. An Agency rod licence is required, by anyone aged 12 years or over, regardless of where fishing takes place. At present there are currently few free fishing waters reflecting perhaps the fact that most riparian land in the Region and associated fishing rights are in private ownership. It is recognised that fishing, as with most other activities, has a cost associated with both the provision of facilities and the management of the fishery.

Recommendations

- *The Agency, local authorities and local angling organisations should work together to identify further opportunities for the development of free fishing adjacent to areas of settlement. Remaining areas of free fishing should be appropriately managed and signed.*
- *Public free fishing areas should be made available to less able anglers.*

6.2.5 Promotion of angling

Angling is one of the most popular sports, however, a national decrease of 1,012 700 in the number of people fishing has been noted from 1980 to 1994.²⁴ Anglers are concerned about this general decline in numbers participating in the sport and are keen to reverse recent trends in order to sustain the future of their sport.

Increased competition from a number of 'new' sports and activities available for young people, parental concerns about safety, a shortage of free fishing sites, and lack of information about clubs with junior sections are all factors which may be contributing to the decline in young people coming into the sport.

The Governing bodies for angling have initiated campaigns such as 'Take a Friend Fishing', 'Give Angling a Go' and 'National Fishing Week' to encourage new anglers but there is also a role for other organisations in supporting this recreational activity. Agency fisheries officers also assist in the promotion of angling through talks, presentations and campaigns outlined here and raising awareness of Agency Fisheries activities.

Clubs and commercial fisheries could benefit their sport by making links with schools and colleges to provide not only an introduction to fishing but also a structure within which young people can continue to take part in angling. Other organisations may be able to support this activity through the provision of free fishing opportunities in sites near centres of population to provide safe, accessible fishing locations. These could cater not only for junior anglers but for those with reduced mobility – as many club waters in the Region are often only accessible to those with cars and the ability to walk some distance, often over rough ground in order to fish.

'Fishing in the South'²⁶ is a free publication which is produced by Southern Region Agency and includes lists of public free fishing areas, and a large number of day ticket waters. In addition facilities for disabled people are included. This publication is regularly updated and is sent out on request. 'News Reels for Anglers'²⁷ is a Regional Fisheries publication which is sent to those interested in Agency Fisheries activities. This includes articles and information relating to current issues and is available on request.



Recommendations

- *To encourage clubs and commercial organisations to invest in the long term future of their sport by promoting opportunities for young people in particular to participate in angling. To encourage clubs to retain or form junior angler sections and to send available information about these clubs to the Agency.*
- *Agency publications such as "News Reels for Anglers" should include articles relating to other aspects of recreational activities to promote better understanding between users.*

6.2.6 Code of conduct for anglers

Many good practices have been drawn together into a Code of Conduct for Specialist Coarse Anglers prepared by the Specialist Anglers Conservation Group (SACG).²⁸ This was first published in April 1997. This Code is supported by a number of organisations including the Agency and the National Federation of Anglers.

Recommendation

- *Wide distribution and availability of the Code of Conduct for specialist coarse anglers, prepared by the Specialist Anglers Conservation Group (SACG). Agency Fisheries Byelaws, Southern Region and other local byelaws to be made widely available to anglers.*

PRINCIPLE

Angling should be promoted and the remaining areas of free fishing should be protected for use by the casual angler.



6.3 Cycling

Nationally there has been an increase in recreational cycling due to a number of factors including the introduction of the mountain bike, increased leisure time and a greater interest in cycling as an environmentally friendly form of transport. As an indication, 20 million people owned bicycles in 1994 and around 2.5 million new bikes are sold each year (Bicycle Association, 1994). The UK Government is committed to growth in cycling through initiatives such as the National Cycling Strategy. Sustrans (Sustainable Transport) and the National Cycle Network initiative will make a significant contribution to the provision for cycling. A national Agency policy is currently being developed for Recreational Cycling.

6.3.1 Cycling activities

There are a number of different types of cycling activities including both competitive forms and informal cycling.

These include mountain biking, touring and road racing. Mountain bikes offer the opportunity to cover all terrain with touring and road racing in general requiring harder surfaces.

6.3.2 Provision in Southern Region

In Southern Region there are a number of excellent recreational routes – these include the South Downs Way (from Winchester, Hampshire to Eastbourne in East Sussex), Cuckoo Trail, Centurion Way, Cycle route around Bewl Water, Kent, Downs Link, and routes on the Isle of Wight and New Forest. However only a number of these are near or cross water and further opportunities may be available for some waterside routes.

Recommendations

- *Cycling routes alongside rivers, inland waters and the coast should be considered and provided where conflicts with other interests can be adequately resolved.*
- *Regard should be taken of socio-economic impacts on rural communities and where possible cycle routes and facilities should be located to increase links to rural areas.*
- *Further investigation of the feasibility of cycle ways adjacent to or connecting sections of waterways such as the Sussex River Ouse, from Newhaven to Lewes and River Arun, Littlehampton to Arundel should be made.*

6.3.3 Design and location of cycle routes

Although recreational cycling is becoming more popular in the Region, the volume of traffic on many roads prevents many people from enjoying this healthy and inexpensive activity. There is a demand for more safe, traffic free, routes for cyclists. One recommendation of the Rural White Paper is that there should be routes linking towns and cities with the wider countryside. The waterside environment frequently presents opportunities for such cycle routes: rivers providing natural links between towns, villages and the open countryside.

Several issues relating to the development of more recreational cycle routes in the Region, particularly in the waterside environment, have emerged. Firstly, there is concern that the waterside environment is hazardous to cyclists. This issue can be addressed through appropriate design and management of cycle routes.

Recommendations

- *The design and construction of recreational cycle routes should reflect the character of the local environment and include adequate safety measures to take account of the waterside environment.*
- *The relevant organisations should work together to promote recreational cycling through the provision of good signage, self guided trails and other leaflets.*

6.3.4 Use of bikes 'off-road'

There have been a number of complaints about the use of mountain bikes 'off road'. Countryside Commission have carried out research which showed that 45 per cent of cyclists preferred to use quiet lanes rather than cycle off road (Countryside Commission, 1994). A booklet 'Gearing Up' has recently been published by the Countryside Commission in partnership with Volvo Cars to encourage safe and responsible cycling in the countryside, aimed at young cyclists and young mountain bikers.

A number of areas in the Region presently offer cycle trail opportunities for mountain bikes on a range of terrains. One example is at Friston Forest, near Seven Sisters Country Park.

6.3.5 Potential Conflicts

Cycling may conflict with other legitimate recreational activities near water such as walking and angling. Such potential conflict is frequently avoided through good signing and the creation of either parallel or shared use paths. Landscape and conservation interests may also appear threatened by proposals for cycle routes. This is partly due to the common misconception that cycle routes by definition are urban in character, requiring the use of black or red tarmac and blue highway signs. While this might be true of commuter routes, different design and construction standards may be applied for recreational paths.

6.3.6 Cycling Initiatives

A number of new initiatives and schemes are taking place across the UK all aiming to encourage the use of bicycles. The

most significant include the DETR (Department of Transport, Environment and the Regions) National Cycling Strategy, the National Cycle Network (NCN), pioneered by Sustrans cycling charity, and a National Byway created by the private sector and Countryside Commission "Greenways". A strategic approach to input and support of cycling schemes is therefore needed. The English Sports Council has produced a development plan from which the South East cycling Forum was formed.

National Cycle Network

It is recommended that the Agency responds to National Cycle Network Proposals in the following way:

The first point of contact for Sustrans proposals should be the Regional Recreation Officer, who will liaise with the relevant Area Conservation and Recreation Staff and Area staff from other functions as appropriate. Support should be provided by Regional Staff from Legal and Estates departments as required and requested.

The Agency endorses the support given by the National Rivers Authority (NRA) to Sustrans in June 1995, prior to the Millennium bid:

Support will be given on a site by site basis where the NRA is able to provide a cycle route on land in its ownership or with the consent of the land owner and planning authority on river sites or where capital works are being undertaken for other NRA purposes.



Recommendations

- *It is recommended that the Agency supports Sustrans by:*
 - i. Supporting the National development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sustrans which should guide working on a Regional level.
 - ii Integrating the National Cycle Network into LEAPS where the trail is alongside rivers or coasts.
 - iii Where appropriate, developing land under Agency control as part of the National Cycle Network.

PRINCIPLE

Cycling will be encouraged on designated bridle ways or cycle routes or where there is permission from the landowner and where there is no detrimental impact on the environment. Provision for further appropriately sited cycling routes, linking waterside areas, will be sought in the Region, taking into account other interests.

6.4 Horse riding

The Environment Committee report, February 1995, states that riding is a traditional activity which is growing in popularity. Much riding is noted to take place near to where people live.¹²

Public Bridle ways and byways and roads are used by horse riders in addition to 'riding by licence'. The British Horse Society promotes the welfare, care and use of the horse and pony and has an Access & Rights of Way Department. Toll rides, where horse riders pay

landowners for use of land, offer opportunities for riders and also for income for farmers.

Agency issues in Southern Region for Horse riding include those highlighted for use of flood banks in Section 5.9.3 in river and coastal areas and potential for use of Agency sites by horses.

6.5 Bathing

The extensive coastline in Southern Region is popular for bathing and paddling. Bathing is only covered here with regard to Agency responsibilities for water quality. In addition to the EC Designated Bathing Beaches outlined in Section 4 there are numerous coastal sites used for bathing particularly in summer.

The main issue concerning bathers is that of water safety and quality which are covered in Section 5.3 and 5.4.



6.6 Canoeing

The British Canoe Union (BCU) currently estimates that there are over 45,000 participants in BCU activities (October 1996). There are an additional significant number of canoeists who are not members of the BCU and there are thought to be 1 million participants in canoeing annually.

The generic term 'canoeing' is used to describe any activity involving with any small craft propelled by a paddle, including the use of both canoes and kayaks, although kayaking is the most popular aspect of the sport. Canoeists are often referred to as 'paddlers' or being involved in 'paddling'

6.6.1 Canoe disciplines

There are a number of different canoeing disciplines which may be carried out competitively or more informally. Each of the disciplines have different requirements and different issues associated with them. These include:

White water disciplines, denoted as all canoeing activities on rapids. Three forms of competitive 'white water' disciplines are recognised namely slalom, rodeo and white water racing in addition to informal whitewater play boating. Touring and expeditioning may be carried out in coastal areas, known as sea kayaking, or on rivers or other inland waters often referred to as placid touring. The distances for touring may vary significantly but in general access to large stretches of water is required. The South of England is popular for surf canoeing. Marathon racing is a popular long distance racing discipline.

6.6.2 Provision, issues and opportunities in Southern Region

Canoeing is a popular activity within Southern Region. The major activities in Southern Region include inland and coastal disciplines of placid and sea touring, marathon racing, surfing, and whitewater play boating/rodeo. Principle locations for canoeing indicated in the Region are given in Appendices 9 to 11

for Hampshire, Sussex and Kent Areas respectively.

Provision, especially introduction to the activity, is primarily through the youth movement, primarily Scouts & Guides, and local clubs. In addition introduction is made through schools and outdoor centres.

The Recreation Survey identified 71 canoe clubs in Southern Region. The majority of individual canoeists in the Region who participate in informal canoeing are not thought to be affiliated to any particular organisation or governing body. Most clubs in the Region host at least one BCU tour or event every year, and provide the majority of the BCU Regional coaching development programme.

By agreement with the Agency, BCU members are licensed to use a number of Agency navigations. In Southern Region this agreement applies to the River Medway Navigation.

Flat water sites

The Region's extensive coastline and long tidal rivers such as the Arun, Adur and Stour provide a resource for touring and paddling. Inland sites provide more quiet conditions for training and introduction to the sport.

Marathon canoe events are held around the Region such as the Medway Marathon held by Maidstone Canoe Club. A general shortage of flat water, inland sites for introduction to the sport and for sprint and marathon canoe training has been identified.

The shortage of flat water sites suitable for training could be addressed in the long term through the identification of

recreation after use of mineral working sites and in the short term through the possible shared use of still waters with other activities through zoning of water space or agreements relating to seasonal use.

Recommendation

- *Explore potential for after use of mineral working sites in the Region to become facilities for paddle sports.*

Whitewater sites

Areas of white water are present in the Region although there is a shortage of suitable sites. There is a need to seek and promote further opportunities in the Region.

In Hampshire, the Woodmill Salmon Pool, on the River Itchen at Southampton, provides some whitewater at certain states of tide, a proposed lottery project at Woodmill may result in the creation of a formal slalom course.

In Kent, white water is present downstream of weirs in particular on the River Medway at Yalding. Opportunities for canoeists are to be provided by Agency planned improvements at Sluice Weir on the River Medway. Early consultation and liaison between Flood Defence engineers and canoeists over the design of a new weir structure have shown that a design solution which meets river engineering requirements and provides a recreational facility for canoeists can be produced.

Whitewater opportunities for canoeists below weirs raises concerns about participants' safety at what are potentially dangerous sites particularly for the inexperienced canoeist. The

Agency does not encourage the use of weirs by canoes where the structures have not been designed or modified for such use. The issue of safe use of instream structures is being addressed by the Agency through a national research project, working with the BCU.

Recommendations

- *To seek further white water opportunities in the Region. Priority should be given to areas for informal use near to existing canoe sites in addition to support for projects for formal facilities.*
- *The Agency should identify opportunities for improvements for canoeists at an early stage in Agency Capital Works schemes such as weir refurbishment, eg Sluice Weir Lock refurbishment on River Medway.*
- *Local canoe clubs and BCU Coaching Organisers should be included in initial consultations on the implications or benefits of sluice or weir modifications.*
- *Support and input into National R & D investigating design guidelines for the Safe use of In-Stream Structures. The Agency will continue to promote safety at weirs through its research programme, through appropriate design measures and through consultation with relevant organisations.*

water courses and water bodies are in private ownership and permission must be obtained from the riparian owner. The general shortage of inland river canoeing is due mainly to the limited areas of public right of navigation even where waters are suitable for canoes and that riparian owners in the Region have traditionally leased their river banks and fishing rights to anglers. However there may be opportunities for canoeists to use these stretches during angling close seasons or even on certain days of the week. Such arrangements exist in other Agency Regions, where negotiations between interested parties have resulted in access agreements between landowners and canoeists. The BCU issues guidance on the establishment of such agreements. The Agency endorses the use of access agreements as an effective means of achieving shared use of rivers and encourages their use.

On some tidal river reaches and other sites where a right of navigation exists, facilities for launching canoes is often poor. This is true of most of the tidal rivers in the Region. This means that users are unnecessarily restricted and that safety may be compromised. Particular examples include the River Arun, where there are few launching opportunities on the tidal section, and the Cuckmere River where launching frequently takes place directly from

6.6.3 Opportunities for canoeists

The majority of river waters available for canoeists are tidal waters which have a public right of navigation. Elsewhere,



the top of a steep flood bank. Provision of launching and landing points for canoeing requires less infrastructure than for many other activities and can often be achieved at relatively low costs. The Agency is currently actively pursuing appropriate design solutions for two such access points on the Arun and Cuckmere and it is hoped that these will provide a model for future projects elsewhere.

Recommendations

- *To continue to support canoeing through the identification and promotion of suitable river launch points in the Region .*
- *Promote canoe launch designs on the Rivers Arun and Cuckmere as demonstration projects for possible use elsewhere.*
- *Voluntary access agreements should be seen as an appropriate way forward for canoeing organisations in the Region to gain greater access to inland rivers. The Agency supports the creation of more access opportunities for waterside and water based recreation.*
- *Investigate possibility of producing canoe publications for the Region through collaboration with Agency and BCU.*

PRINCIPLES

Access for informal, competitive , white water and flat water canoeing should be encouraged, where the consent of the riparian owner has been obtained.

Organisations should work with canoeists and the BCU to improve access, facility provision and safety for canoeists.

Agency is the navigation authority are referred to in this document as "Agency navigation".

Southern Region supports a significant amount of inland boating, including a number of tidal navigation in addition to the Agency Navigation on the River Medway and the Harbour of Rye.

6.7.2 Public rights of Navigation

Inland cruising is provided on a number of tidal river stretches where there is a public right of navigation. These include the tidal waters of the Arun and Adur in West Sussex; the Ouse in East Sussex, Itchen and Hamble in Hampshire waters on the Isle of Wight and the Stour and Eastern Rother in Kent. On non-tidal reaches, with no navigation rights, permission to use watercraft must be obtained from the riparian owners.

The Agency recreation survey identified a number of issues for inland boating in the Region including the general lack of access points to the water for smaller craft. This problem is common throughout the Region. For example on the navigable tidal reaches of the River Arun, the existing launching facilities are located many miles downstream of popular cruising reaches. This, combined with the lack of visitor mooring sites at Arundel and beyond, makes cruising for visiting craft extremely difficult.

A number of commercial hire boat operators are located within the Region. These include hire of small rowing boats such as those on the River Arun and River Medway for informal boating and larger craft which allow passengers to travel larger distances along inland river stretches.

6.7 Inland Navigation

6.7.1 Navigable waters.

Tidal rivers very often have a general public right of navigation extending from the estuary to the tidal limit, although there are exceptions. These waters shall be referred to throughout the strategy as 'Tidal navigation'. On tidal navigations in general waterborne activities are subject to the byelaws of local Harbour Authorities. In addition, the Agency operates byelaws which relate to Flood Defence activities and act to limit speeding, on all stretches of 'main' river. Power boating locations, as identified by the Agency Recreation Survey are given in Appendix 12.

A number of organisations are responsible nationally for the maintenance and management of additional navigable waters which include rivers and canals. These include the Agency, British Waterways, Broads Authority and various other navigation authorities. The Agency currently undertakes operational activity in respect of navigation in five of its Regions including lengths of the river Thames, the Medway, a number of rivers in East Anglia, the Lower Derwent, Market Weighton Canal, Dee Estuary and Harbour of Rye. Waters where the



6.7.3 Agency Navigation

Medway

The Agency is the Navigation Authority for the River Medway which gives access to 31km (19 miles) of the freshwater Medway above its tidal limit. The navigation starts at Allington Lock, near Maidstone and extends to the footbridge immediately downstream of the Leigh flood barrier just west of Tonbridge.

Craft on the river are registered with the Agency for a charge which is related to the length of the vessel. 819 annual registrations were sold for powered vessels in addition to over 1100 short term registrations for both powered and manual craft in 1996/97 on the Medway Navigation. Details regarding the Agency Medway Navigation can be obtained from Kent Area Office and further details regarding registration and charges from the Income Section, Regional Office, Worthing. A booklet "A Guide to The Medway Navigation" is available from the Agency²⁹.



Navigations are not only used for boating activities but also attract many more visitors along the banks and at

lockside sites to watch boats and other river activities.

The Harbour of Rye is covered in further detail in Section 5.8.

Recommendations

- *Investigations should be made into the feasibility of new navigations or extensions of existing rights of navigation.*
- *Investigate need for promotional material for inland navigation opportunities in the Region and produce information as appropriate. This could include development of a clear map showing rivers in Southern Region with Tidal navigation and Agency navigation to include essential contact lists such as harbour authorities and other relevant user groups as a hand out for members of the public.*
- *Relevant authorities, Agency works and consents must ensure that navigation rights are protected.*
- *Boat users should be consulted to ensure that any provision of recreational facilities that are those required. Locations for increased visitor moorings and launching sites should be sought on those navigable rivers where a need has been identified.*
- *Riverside Agency land holdings should be promoted as facilities for recreation users, such as Town Lock and Allington on the Medway Navigation.*
- *A directory of launching facilities available to the public in the Region should be compiled.³⁰*

6.7.7 Safety and Speed

Limits are set by byelaws to control the speeds of boats on navigable rivers. The limits may differ between rivers and between different stretches of the same river. The limits are set to safeguard other river users, wildlife and bankside vegetation as well as protecting river banks from erosion.

For Agency navigations and those controlled by British Waterways, a new initiative, the Boat Safety Scheme, has been set up to minimise the risks of fire and explosion on boats and to reduce the risk of damage to the environment from pollution. It is intended that this scheme will be introduced on the Agency's Medway Navigation subject to changes in byelaw legislation. In addition third party insurance is desirable for all boat owners to safeguard other users in using navigable waters.

Recommendations

- *Promote the Boat Safety Scheme to all owners of craft on the Agency Medway Navigation in advance of scheme implementation.*
- *The Agency should promote the requirement for Third party insurance for inland navigation craft on Agency navigations.*

PRINCIPLE

Existing facilities for users of Tidal and Agency navigation should be protected and additional opportunities for inland navigation investigated.

6.8 Sailing

The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) is the National Governing Body for all boating disciplines including sailing, windsurfing and power boating (not including canoeing or rowing).

Locations for dinghy sailing and yachting activities in Southern Region have been identified from the survey. These are illustrated in Appendices 13, 14 and 15 for Hampshire, Sussex and Kent respectively. Dinghy and yachting activities take place in both coastal areas and on inland waters. The relatively sheltered waters around the coastline of the Region have been extensively developed for all forms of sailing, with the Solent in the west and Medway Estuary and Swale in the east being of particular importance. The coastline from Whitstable to Dover in Kent and from Dover to Selsey, in West Sussex, is generally more exposed and suitable for more experienced users.



The Region has a large number of manmade still waters including gravel pits and reservoirs. Several of the largest reservoirs and gravel pits, provide dinghy sailing through clubs, providing good conditions for tuition. Many gravel pits are however too small for extensive

sailing activities and the number offering sailing facilities is low. Further facilities are needed for launching, landing and berthing of craft.

Marinas and sailing clubs have developed in the Region and increasing use and demand may conflict between the desire for further such developments and the high conservation value of the Region's estuaries, many of which have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and carry further designations under the European Habitats Directive. The growth in yachting is indicated by the rapid growth in mooring numbers which have increased by 27% within the last 25 years, in the Solent.³¹

Recommendation

- *Greater use of larger inland water bodies can be made by owners offering leases to multiple water users including sailing clubs. In developing such leases it is recognised that there may have to be a system of time or spatial zoning specified in the lease to minimise conflict between user groups.*

6.8.1 Promotion and liaison

Sailing is an activity which can be carried out by users over a wide age range and is a popular activity for retired people. There is a need to promote sailing to all and to continue to encourage young people into the sport such as through the development of multi-sports centres as evidence suggests that young people want to move from activity to activity³².

Recommendation

- *To promote sailing as an activity for all.*

6.8.2 Environmental conditions

Issues facing sailing activities in inland waters include availability of water of sufficient depth. Water depth in lakes, for example, may be reduced by silting of certain areas or by lack of water especially in periods of low rainfall or flow.

PRINCIPLE

Existing opportunities for sailing both inland and coastal waters should be safeguarded. Participation for all should be encouraged through existing clubs and opportunities sought at water sports centres for all sections of the community.

Recommendation

- *Where physical problems such as silting limit sailing activity in inland waters problems should be reviewed by the relevant organisations and appropriate management taken.*

6.9 Windsurfing

Windsurfing or sailboarding is an activity recognised by the English Sports Council and the RYA. In Southern Region it is centred on coastal areas and on certain designated inland waters. It is rapidly increasing in popularity, with young males dominating the activity. National participation was estimated at 0.6 million

in 1988 (1.4% of population) and this is expected to increase to 0.74 million (1.8% of population), Leisure Consultants, 1989.³³

Southern Region is among the best areas in the country for windsurfing and sailing in part due to the wind conditions which are suitable for a wide range of standards of participants. The Solent, for example, offers a relatively sheltered and safe environment while the open coastline is widely used by the experienced. (RYA Windsurfing Strategy, 1995).³⁴ The North Kent coast, in particular Whitstable, is important for windsurfing in the Region.

The need to promote windsurfing to all sections of the community is raised in the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Windsurfing development strategy.³⁴ Depending on the level of expertise windsurfing can lead to considerable contact with water and increased risk of water borne infection. This issue is discussed in Section 5. Formal facilities such as changing rooms and car parks are also needed for windsurfing activities.

Recommendation

- *To promote and develop facilities to encourage participation in windsurfing to all.*

PRINCIPLE

Further opportunities for windsurfing, particularly on inland sites will be identified and promoted. Sites should be made available to all particularly for use by school groups and activity centres.

6.10 Surfing

Surfing is a water related activity which takes place at a number of sites around the south and south west coasts of Britain. Areas used for surfing in Southern Region include West and East Wittering and Brighton in Sussex and a number of sites on the Isle of Wight and Hampshire and North East Kent.

One of the main concerns of surfers is that of water quality, this issue has been raised by the pressure group Surfers Against Sewage. Water Quality is covered in Section 5 of this strategy. Surf waves are produced as a result of particular combinations of weather conditions and characteristics of the coast such as positions of rocks and reefs. Production of waves may also be affected by any development or works which alter coastal processes of the area. Coastal processes are discussed again in Section 5.

6.11 Personal Watercraft (PWC) or "Jet Skis"

Personal Watercraft (PWC) include any vessel referred to as a jet ski, wet bike or other similar description. PWCs are generally propelled by a jet engine and steered by means of a handlebar system.

The Personal Watercraft Federation is one governing body for the competitive use of PWCs or Jet-skis as they are otherwise known. The RYA has now adopted the sport.

Coastal launch site locations include a number of sites in North Kent such as Whitstable, Herne Bay and Margate and Eastbourne, Brighton and Worthing in Sussex

6.11.1 Perceived image of PWC

The use of PWCs is perceived as a particularly noisy activity. Issues of problems with noise and speed of craft have been noted in the Region, for example near Kingsferry Bridge, Swale, North Kent. Areas designated for PWC use should be located near to areas of existing noise such as near to busy roads and away from residential areas or habitats and species sensitive to noise disturbance.



An independent environmental Impact Assessment, 'Jetskis and Funcraft' was carried out on behalf of North West Water 35. The results from the assessment indicate that further provision should be made in locations where intensive recreational activities have already been promoted, such as water ski parks, in addition to recently created waters such as after use of quarries.

Jet Ski or PWC activities and Water skiing activities are often wrongly treated as one activity. Each activity has very different requirements and management.

Participants in use of PWC activities should receive necessary training for safe use such as training courses run by BMIF.

Recommendation

- *Sites in the Region suitable for use of PWCs, such as away from residential areas or habitats and species sensitive to disturbance, should be identified.*

PRINCIPLE

1. Use of PWC should be promoted as a recreational activity in well managed designated areas which should be sited away from sensitive environmental sites and other recreation activities.
2. PWC participants must follow Codes of practice.

6.12 Rowing

Rowing is a popular recreational activity which takes place on both navigable rivers, still waters and coastal waters. Rowing includes boats available for hire and as a competitive sporting activity. In 1996 the Amateur Rowing Association (ARA), the governing body for rowing in England, estimated over 15,000 individual members with a possible additional 30,000 affiliated through clubs. Rowing has been further

promoted by the availability of dry rowing facilities. Rowing has previously been thought of as an activity taken up through public schools, but opportunities and participation is now being widened.

In Southern Region, boat hire is available at a number of locations including on the Medway Navigation, on the River Arun and River Ouse in Sussex.

Competitive rowing takes place on rivers and inland waters and in coastal areas in Southern Region. Provision is through rowing clubs, schools and colleges.

The number of rowing clubs in Southern Region identified from the Southern Region survey includes

• Hampshire & Isle of Wight	13
• Sussex	5
• Kent	6

There is a requirement for further areas of flat water to be made available for rowing and for provision of associated changing facilities.

Recommendation

- *To identify further water areas available for rowing, particularly within cycling distances of schools.*

PRINCIPLE

Additional areas for rowing will be identified and promoted in suitable inland areas.

6.13 Water skiing

Water skiing requires generally large expanses of open flat water and takes place mainly on coastal sites or on large inland sites. The national governing body

is the British Water Ski Federation (BWSF). It is estimated that in 1989 there were 400,000 participants nationally³³ and that it is growing in popularity. The BWSF, Southern Regional Committee development plan for waterskiing guides activities within the South, by "addressing the needs of a rapidly expanding family sport".³⁸

6.13.1 Availability of suitable sites

Requirements for water skiing activities are primarily access to a long area of flat water with minimum width approximately 80m. Significant sites in the Region include Langstone Harbour, Chichester Lakes, West Sussex, Medway Estuary and Lydd, Kent and on the Test Estuary in Hampshire. A shortage of inland sites for training has been identified in the Region. Appendix 19 illustrates waterski sites in Southern Region obtained from the Agency Recreation Survey.

Recommendation

- *Further opportunities should be sought for additional sites for waterskiing provision in the Region.*

6.13.2 Cable tow

Cable tow is an alternative method for water skiing to that of being towed behind a boat. It is based on an overhead cable system and allows several people to ski in a circuit at the same time. The possibilities of cable tow to increase opportunities for introducing people to the activity need to be developed in the Region.



6.13.3 Perceived image water skiing

The British Waterski Federation has made significant efforts to improve the perceptions of its activity. New facilities are recommended where these can be managed by a waterski club.

PRINCIPLE

Existing opportunities for Water skiing will be protected and Water skiing will be promoted on further sites where conflicts with other interests can be adequately resolved.

6.14 Sub Aqua

It is difficult to assess the number of participants in sub aqua or SCUBA diving nationally or for the Region, as many divers participate outside of a club structure. However the number of active divers in Great Britain with the British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC) are estimated at 90,000 (BSAC, January 1996). Sub aqua is increasing in popularity with the increase in the number of people travelling abroad with new opportunities to participate in sub aqua in warmer, clearer environments, the advances in equipment and number of training schools.

The governing body recognised by the English Sports Council is BSAC although there are a number of organisations involved in SCUBA diving including the Sub-aqua Association (SAA) and PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors).

6.14.1 Provision, Issues and Opportunities in Southern Region

Dive locations identified in the Recreation survey are indicated on the map in Appendix 20. Within the Region there are a significant number of clubs. The number of BSAC clubs are:

● Hampshire & Isle of Wight	21
● Sussex	10
● Kent	23

There are approximately 50 clubs with the SAA South East Region with over 1,000 members (this figure includes divers outside the Agency Southern Region). In addition there are a significant number of divers who are not affiliated to a sub aqua organisation. Divers also visit the region to participate in sub aqua activities from other areas of the country.

6.14.2 Inland sites

A number of inland sites provide sub aqua opportunities in Southern Region. These include Chatham docks; Leybourne Lakes, Larkfield; Bewl Water, near Tunbridge Wells in Kent Area, Oving Lake, near Chichester West Sussex and Ardingly, East Sussex. Sub aqua activities take place in rivers across the Region such as the River Medway, Kent. Inland dive sites are of interest in their own right and are valuable training sites for novices and when there are less suitable conditions for diving at coastal sites.

Recommendation

- To seek the provision of further inland sites and training facilities for sub aqua activities in Southern Region.

6.14.3 Coastal sites

The extensive coastline of Southern Region provides close access to sea diving for the large number of divers within Southern Region in addition to those travelling to the coast from London or beyond the South East.



Requirements for divers vary depending on the level of experience and individual interests. The Sussex and Hampshire coast line is particularly good for sub aqua activities for a number of reasons. The majority of diving takes place on the large number of diveable wrecks arising from the two world wars and the extensive seafaring activity of the English Channel although a number of beach sites are used most typically for training dives. Sussex has more wrecks off its coast than any other county in the UK with over 1000 wrecks located along the Southern Coast.³⁷ Waters off the South Coast have relatively good visibility, depending on weather conditions. There is also a varied geology with associated habitat types such as hard rock and chalk cliff reefs which support various underwater life.

6.14.4 Access to the Sea

Use of sites further from the coast necessitates the use of boats and there is a need for slipway access at all states of the tide. Commonly used launch sites



include Brighton, Shoreham-by-Sea, Eastbourne and Littlehampton in Sussex Area, Rye in Kent Area and various locations along the Hampshire coast in the Solent.

Recommendation

- To identify and support the provision of suitable access facilities in addition to existing sites.

6.14.5 Archaeology

Coastal Archaeology includes a variety of remains such as harbours, ship wrecks, sea defences and submerged settlements. A number of ship wrecks are protected by the Protection of Wrecks Act, 1973, around the coastline of Southern Region, such as HMS Hazardous off Bracklesham Bay, West Sussex, designated in 1986.

Amateur divers have assisted in discovery, location and survey of a number of ship wrecks such as the Mary Rose, in Spit Sand Ford, Portsmouth.³⁶ Trained divers are involved in archaeological survey work with organisations such as the Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology and National Nautical Archeological Society.

There is a need to raise awareness of the importance of sites of archaeological heritage and to encourage divers to assist in location and have regard for archaeological interest of wrecks.

6.14.6 Marine Conservation

Seasearch is a project initiated by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS). The Sussex Seasearch project has been supported by the Agency, East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council and English Nature and

undertakes ecological surveys at marine sites with the aid of volunteer divers.

Recommendation

- Raise awareness of archaeological and conservation importance in marine sites. To encourage involvement of volunteer divers in initiatives to investigate marine archaeological sites and ecological surveys with organisations such as English Heritage and Marine Conservation Society.

6.14.7 Safety

A number of the issues relating to sub aqua have already been covered in earlier guiding sections such as Water Safety and Access to the water. Sub aqua as its name indicates is an immersion sport and so risks from water borne infection is likely to be higher than many other activities. A large number of diving activities are carried out at a distance from the coast and contact with discharges from long sea outfalls may be more frequent.

Additional safety issues also arise from use of navigable waters for sub aqua activities. There is a clear need for divers to be easily located by other users and for codes of practice to be followed. Permission must be obtained for sub-aqua activities in navigable waters from the relevant authority. In general those involved in sub aqua activities are well trained and there is a greater need to educate other users to recognise

signals used in SCUBA diving and to act appropriately.

Recommendations

- Safe codes of practice should be encouraged through clubs.
- Promote use of International flag 'A' to be used by all divers and use of Surface Marker Buoys (SMBs) to aid location.
- Promote recognition of signals used in sub aqua activities by other users and promote good practice.

6.14.8 Fishing nets and line

Problems which may be faced by divers include the presence of discarded fishing nets and lines left in water. Due to the nature of new longer lasting synthetic materials any discarded nets or line will persist in the water environment substantially longer than any rope equivalent.

Recommendation

- Need to raise awareness regarding potential danger associated with fishing nets and line in waters used for diving and encourage good codes of practice.

PRINCIPLES

1. Further suitable inland sites for SCUBA diving will be investigated and promoted.
2. SCUBA diving will not be supported in areas where safety is compromised. All divers should follow Codes of practice and observe local byelaws.



6.15 Additional activities

A number of additional activities are noted in the Region. Model boating activities are carried out in the Region for example, by Canterbury Model Boat Club at ponds in Kent and at Hove Lagoon, Sussex. New activities such as Aqua-golf have appeared in locations such as Leybourne Lakes, Kent, which involves golf driving over the lakes.

River Festivals are held on a number of rivers including the Medway River Festival and Stour River Festival held annually. These often include a number of different activities such as bath races. An annual raft race is held on the River Ouse in East Sussex. Dragon boating is another activity carried out in the Region. On the River Medway, for example, dragon boating is carried out by Tonbridge Canoe Club mainly in the summer months.

Kite flying is also carried out in the Region, this may be informally or as part of a more formal sporting activity for example, where buggies are used with kites such as at Camber Sands, Kent Area.

6.16 Wildfowling

Within this strategy, wildfowling is only considered in the context of Agency land interests. The Agency has inherited a number of land holdings on which wildfowling rights have been issued.

On priority sites, Site Management Plans will identify issues and interests relevant to each site, including those relating to recreational activities. When site leases come up for renewal decisions regarding future management and use of sites will be made based on the Site Management Plan recommendations. Where Site

Management Plans are not considered necessary all interests for each site will be balanced and recreation activities assessed.

Wildfowling may cause a number of problems such as the use of lead shot, disturbance and direct loss of birds. Where it is considered that wildfowling activities carried out on Agency land holdings are having a detrimental impact on nature conservation interests shooting rights will not be exercised in renewal of leases.

6.17 Water sports Activity Centres

A large number of water sports and activity centres are present throughout the country. These may be run and funded in a number of different ways such as by local authorities or run commercially. Such centres are frequently used by schools and organised group visits, and they provide an important facility to enable youngsters and others to experience a range of activities at one location, such as 'taster' days. Two thirds of all centres surveyed in the National Youth Water sports Audit, 1996³² offered taster or have a go sessions for young people. These sessions allow young people to try a variety of activities without the need for an individual to contact several clubs.

After participation in a 'taster' session it is important that people are encouraged to continue a particular activity, through participation in a club. The concept of sporting continuum from informal participation through regular participation to sporting excellence is supported by the English Sports Council which aims to form closer links with clubs to aid continuity.

The Agency Southern Region Recreation Survey identified a total of 18 Water sports Centres in the Region. These are shown in Appendix 21. These water sports and activity centres are situated on areas of enclosed inland waters such as Bewl in Kent and at river locations such as the Rivers Adur and Arun in Sussex and on the coast for example at Calshot Hampshire. Many are supported by local authorities but for many, security of funding is a continued problem.

Safety at Water sport Centres is now guided by The report of water sports, safety working group.³⁹

Recommendations

- *Such centres should continue to be supported, particularly by local authorities. Further opportunities for the creation of new centres, where there is demand, and capacity should be sought in association with local clubs.*
- *Operators of centres need to publicise further the valuable role these centres play in introducing a range of water sports to young people and others who may not otherwise have the opportunity.*

PRINCIPLE

Water sports outdoor centres are a valuable resource for the introduction to water related activities and should be given continued support. Further opportunities for additional centres should be considered and supported.

7. The Way Forward – Implementation of the Strategy

Policies and recommended actions contained within this strategy will be taken forward in the production of an Action Plan document, both the Consultation draft and Action plan document will act to guide those involved in planning, providing and managing recreation in the water environment. Implementation of recommended actions and policies is important if action is to be taken on the ground. Information contained within the document should become integral to activities of the Agency.

Recommendations

That the Recreation Strategy should:

- *guide recreation input into and review of LEAPS by the Agency*
- *be used as a reference document by local authorities in producing Local plans and in making decisions on planning applications.*
- *guide day to day Agency activities in all departments, particularly in the Fisheries, Ecology and Recreation department. The document should also guide future work in Southern Region, identification of opportunities and partnerships.*
- *Link with other initiatives/strategies from other organisations.*

PRINCIPLE

The strategy should be used by all relevant organisations, including :

Environment Agency
English Sports Council (Southern and South East Regions)
Countryside Commission
Local Authorities
Recreation clubs
Governing bodies of Sport



Glossary

Access 2000	Initiative promoted by the Country Landowners Association (CLA) to encourage landowners to make more land available for recreation, including waterside sites.	SCUBA diving	Diving with use of Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Statutory site designated by the Countryside Commission/ Countryside Commission of Wales	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Statutory site designated by English Nature or the Countryside Council for Wales for their biological interest of at least Regional importance; or their earth science of at least national importance.
Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA)	Statutory site designated by the Agriculture departments in conjunction with English Nature, the Countryside Council for Wales, Countryside Commission, English Heritage, CADW and the Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions (DETR).	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Designated under the habitats directive (directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.)
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Statutory site declared by local authorities in consultation with English Nature or the Countryside Council for Wales.	Special Protection Area (SPA)	Statutory site designated by the DoE for their international importance under the EC birds Directive (79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds)
National Nature Reserve	Statutory site declared by English Nature or the Countryside Commission for Wales for their biological or earth science interest of national importance.	Sustainability	"Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland Report, 1987)
Ramsar site	Statutory site designated by the DoE/Welsh Office for their international importance for wetland communities.	Sustrans	Cycling charity working for sustainable transport, pioneering the National Cycle Network (NCN).



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Party ID: _____(for office use only)

Questionnaire for Sports and Recreation Organisations



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY

Water Based Recreation Survey

Name of club/organisation.....

Contact namePosition within organisation

Contact address

Telephone (day)(evening)

1. Which of the following sentences best describes your organisation?

(please tick)

we are a club run by volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
we are part of a public sector organisation e.g. local authority	<input type="checkbox"/>
we are a commercial/private business	<input type="checkbox"/>
other (please describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. FOR CLUBS ONLY

Approximately how many members do you have?

3. What information is available to the public about your organisations recreational activities; e.g. leaflets, guide books?

4. DATA PROTECTION ACT

The Environment Agency is licensed to hold personal data on computer. Any data stored may not be passed on to any commercial organisation. However, we may wish to pass details of your organisation to members of the public or to promote your club activity in the form of a leaflet or watersports directory. If you do not wish your organisation to be promoted in this way please tick the box below.

I do not wish details of my organisation to be passed on to the public or published in any leaflets or directories.

☐

5. ACTIVITIES/SITES AND FACILITIES

To help prepare a strategy for water related recreation in the region, we are gathering information on what activities are currently taking place on rivers, lakes and around the coast. It would help us greatly if you could use the table on the next page to describe the activities your organisation is involved in. Below is a list of activities to choose from but please include any others if they take place on or near water.

canoeing	dinghy sailing	coarse fishing	sea fishing	yachting	rowing	nature study
game fishing	sub aqua	water skiing	cycling	jetski/PWC	birdwatching	walking
motor cruising	horse riding	windsurfing				

We would also like to know about any recreation facilities your organisation may own or lease. Please use the list of facility types below as a guide when filling in the table.

fishing lodge	club house	slipway	moorings	visitor moorings	landing stage
nature trail	boat hire	bird hide	wheelchair access	refreshments	car park
toilets	fishing platforms	interpretive boards	footpath	picnic site	safety boats
campsite	cycle trail	education centre	view points	play areas	visitor centre

Appendix 1 Environment Agency Questionnaire – continued

Use this table to tell us about your organisation's sporting and recreational activities and the sites that you use. As an example, the first few rows on this table have been filled in for you.

[illegible]

8 6. FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION

If any of the following factors are problems which affect participation in your organisation's activities, please use the table below to indicate where these problems occur?

PROBLEM FACTOR	SITE WHERE PROBLEM OCCURS	PROBLEM FACTOR	SITE WHERE PROBLEM OCCURS
Lack of access to water		Poor access to site	
Conflict with recreational users		Lack of car parking	
Conflict with commercial users		Other – please describe	
Lack of space on water			

Finally, do you have any comments or additional information which may help in the preparation of a Regional Water Recreation Strategy; e.g. details of any plans your organisation has for future development and improvements, examples of good management practice or details of any facilities lacking in your area? Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Thank you for your time in completing this survey.

Please return your survey in the envelope provided to Allison Thorpe, Recreation Project Officer, Environment Agency Southern Region, Guildbourne House, Chatsworth Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 1LD

Appendix 2 Recreation – Environment Act 1995

Appendix 2 Recreation – Environment Act 1995

1. DUTIES

Section 7 Recreational Duties Relating to all Functions of the Agency

The Agency has a duty to take account of recreation in the performance of all its functions. Specifically:

- the preservation and maintenance of access for the public to places of natural beauty and to buildings, sites and other objects of archaeological, architectural or historic interest;
- to ensure that water and land under the NRA's control is made available for recreational purposes, and that in doing so the needs of persons who are chronically sick or disabled are taken into account.

Section 6 Duty to Promote Recreation

The Agency will generally promote the use of inland and coastal waters, and land associated with them for the purpose of recreation to the extent that it deems desirable.

Section 9 Code of Practice on Conservation, Access and Recreation

This code of practice issued by the Secretary of State gives practical guidance to the Agency and promotes desirable practices with respect to the Agency's environmental and recreational duties.

CODE OF PRACTICE

The Code requires the Agency:

- to have full and up to date information on conservation and recreation whilst fulfilling its duties;
- to seek advice from Regional advisory committees;
- to prepare catchment and management plans particularly for Agency owned sites;
- to recognise the social importance of sport and recreation;
- to incorporate where possible recreation facilities into programmes resulting from the requirements of the other Agency functions.

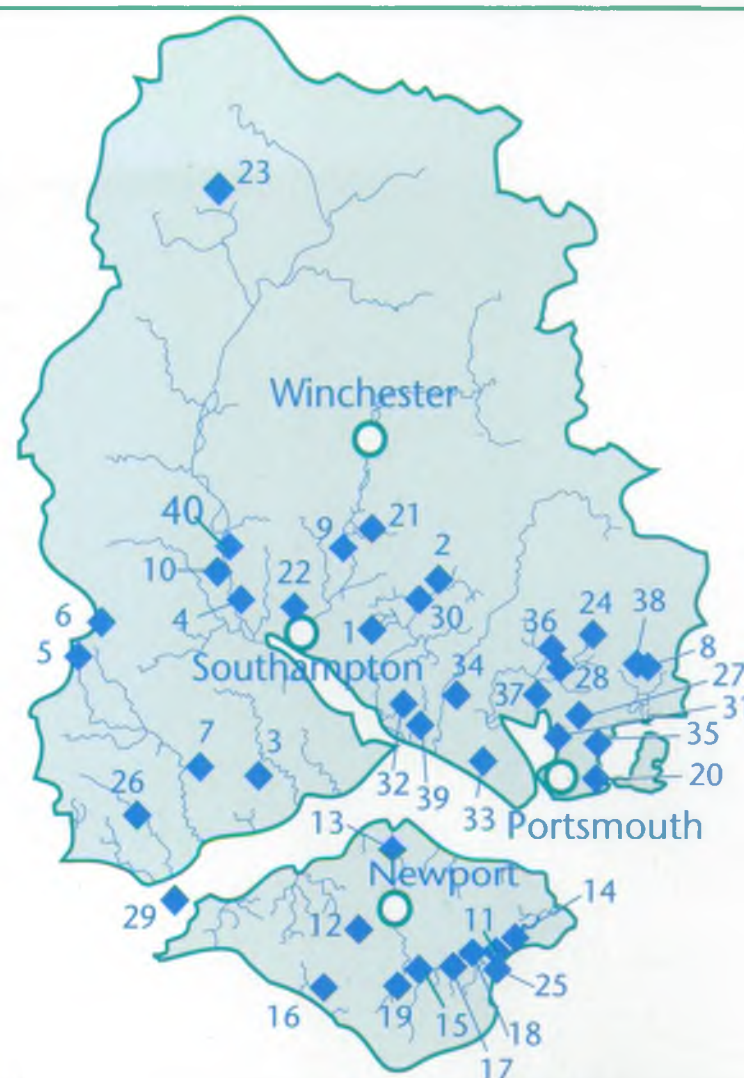
Additional relevant legislation

Rights of Way Act, 1990.

Disability Discrimination Act, 1995.

Occupiers Liability Act, 1957.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Botley Grange | 21 River Itchen, Bishopstoke |
| 2 Abbey Mill Pond, Bishop's Waltham | 22 Southampton Common Lakes |
| 3 Hatchet Pond, East Boldre | 23 Charlton Lakes, Andover |
| 4 Testwood Mill Fishery | 24 Soake Pond, Denmead |
| 5 Cadman's Pool | 25 Yaverland, IOW |
| 6 Janesmore Pond, New Forest | 26 Sway Lakes, Lymington |
| 7 Roundhill Pond, New Forest | 27 Hilsea Moat |
| 8 Staunton Country Park | 28 Southwick Reservoir |
| 9 Lakeside, Eastleigh | 29 The Solent |
| 10 Broadlands Estate | 30 Brooklands Hamble |
| 11 Morton Farm, IOW | 31 Baffins Pond, Portsmouth |
| 12 Gunville Pond, IOW | 32 Abshot Pond, Hook |
| 13 Somerton Reservoir, IOW | 33 Brockhurst Moat, Gosport |
| 14 River Yar, Barding, IOW | 34 Funtley Lake |
| 15 Hale Manor Lakes, IOW | 35 Sinah Lake, Hayling Island |
| 16 Island Farm, Brightstone, IOW | 36 River Wallington, Southwick |
| 17 River Yar, Alverstone, IOW | 37 River Wallington, Fareham |
| 18 River Yar, Adgestone, IOW | 38 Leigh Park Lake, Havant |
| 19 Merstone Lakes, IOW | 39 Brownwich Pond, Titchfield |
| 20 Langstone Harbour | 40 Longbridge Lake |



Data compiled from 1996 Agency water related survey



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend: — Main River ◆ Coarse Fishing Sites
 ◡ Area Boundary ○ Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 523400
 metres : metres



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PRINCIPAL COARSE FISHING LOCATIONS IN HAMPSHIRE

- 1 River Arun, Greatham Bridge
- 2 Ardingly Reservoir
- 3 River Arun Pulborough
- 4 River Arun Houghton Bridge
- 5 Horam
- 6 Reservoirs, Clive Vale
- 7 Ecclesbourne Reservoir, Hastings
- 8 Cider Cottage Coarse Fishery
- 9 Burton Mill Pond, Rye
- 10 Chichester Canal
- 11 River Rother Rogate
- 12 Oast Farm Fishery
- 13 Honey's Green Coarse Fishery, Framfield
- 14 River Ouse, Barcombe Mills
- 15 Wyland Angling Centre
- 16 Borde Hill Estate, Haywards Heath
- 17 Cuckfield Fishery
- 18 Tanyard Fishery, Danehill
- 19 Doctor's Lake, Horsham
- 20 Patching Pond
- 21 River Adur, Tenchford
- 22 River Arun, Timberly Farm
- 23 Wintons Fishery
- 24 River Arun, Arundel
- 25 Quarry Land Lakes, Chichester
- 26 Barratts Park Farm, Heathfield
- 27 Wishingtree Reservoir, Hastings
- 28 Bucks Hole Reservoir, Hastings
- 29 Hammers Pond, Hastings
- 30 Broomham Lake, Catsfield
- 31 Glyndley Quarry
- 32 Pevensey Haven
- 33 Smith's Corpse Pond, Aldingbourn
- 34 Heath Pond Petersfield
- 35 River Rother, Petworth
- 36 River Arun, Amberly
- 37 River Adur, Upper Beeding

- 38 River Arun, Hardham
- 39 River Adur, Wineham
- 40 River Adur, Twineham
- 41 Malthouse, Wisborough Green
- 42 River Arun, Bignor
- 43 Farthings Pond, Powdermill Wood
- 44 Lurgashall Mill
- 45 River Rother, Sheet
- 46 River Park, Lodsworth
- 47 Lakes, Petworth Park
- 48 River Rother, Fittleworth
- 49 River Rother, Chithurst
- 50 River Arun, Watersfield

- 51 Roosthole Pond, Coolhurst
- 52 Birchenbridge Pond, Coolhurst
- 53 Horton Clay Pits, Henfield
- 54 Lakes Sheffield Park, Uckfield
- 55 Hellingly Pond
- 56 Millwards Farm, Laughton
- 57 Conyboro, Lewes
- 58 Decoy Pond, East Hoathly
- 59 Wallers Haven
- 60 Wick Farm Lake, Albourne
- 61 Whitelands Reservoir, Ditchling
- 62 Stepstones, Dumpford
- 63 River Arun, Rudgwick
- 64 Furnace Pond, Slaugham
- 65 Passies Pond, Coombes
- 66 River Rother, Coultershaw Bridge

- 67 River Rother, Shopham Bridge
- 68 River Rother, Durford Mill
- 69 River Rother, Chithurst
- 70 Combe Pond, Rake
- 71 Nyewood Pond, Rogate
- 72 Longmoor Pond, Greatham
- 73 Holmbush Lake, Midhurst
- 74 Ludlay Pond, Berwick
- 75 Cooks Pond, Milland
- 76 New Pond, Midhurst
- 77 North Mill, Midhurst
- 78 Newells Pond, Lower Beeding
- 79 River Rother, Woolbeding
- 80 Bethwins Ponds, Chiddingfold
- 81 Durleigh Marsh Fishery, Petersfield

Data compiled from 1996 Agency water related survey



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:



Main River

Area Boundary

◆ Coarse Fishing Sites

○ Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 486900
metres : metres



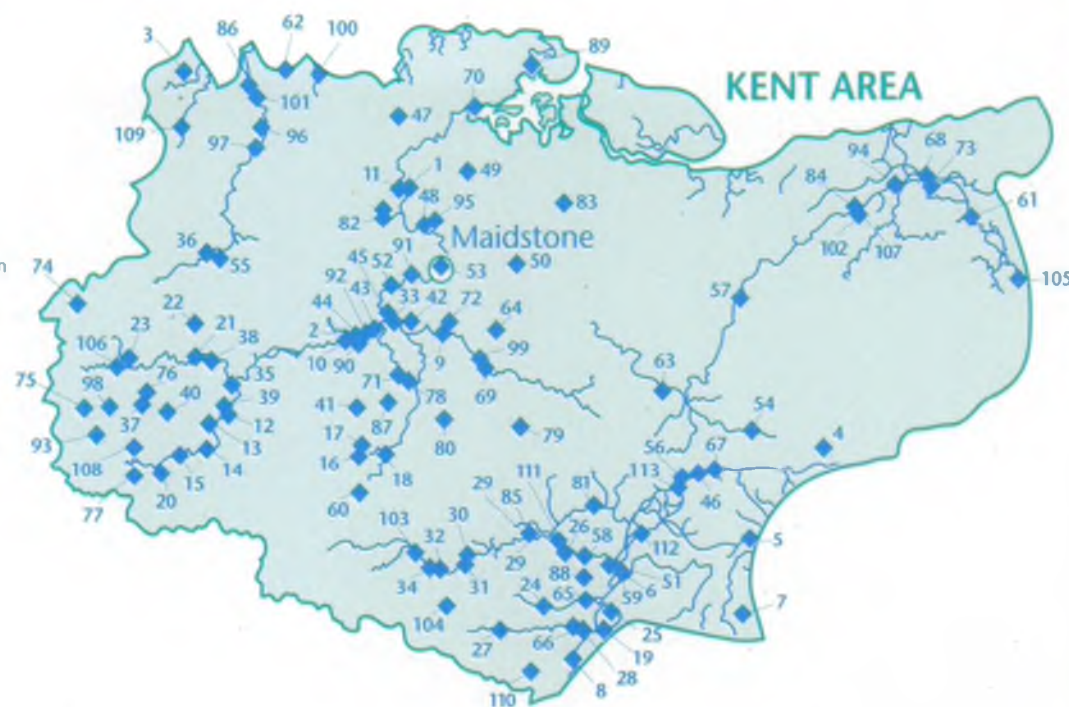
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PRINCIPAL COARSE FISHING LOCATIONS IN SUSSEX



- 1 Burham Reservoir
- 2 River Medway, East Peckham
- 3 Danson Park
- 4 Brockhill Country Park
- 5 St Mary's Bay Lake
- 6 Royal Military Canal
- 7 Dungeness Long Pits
- 8 Pett Pools
- 9 River Beult
- 10 River Medway, Stiltstead Farm
- 11 Brookland Lake, Snodland
- 12 Lake, Fordcombe
- 13 River Medway, Ashurst
- 14 Balls Green, River Medway
- 15 Hartfield, River Medway
- 16 River Teise, Lamberhurst
- 17 Horsmonden Pond
- 18 River Teise, Finchcocks
- 19 Nook Beach, Winchelsea
- 20 Rystwood Farm Lake, Forest Row
- 21 River Eden, Chiddingstone
- 22 Bough Beech Reservoir
- 23 River Eden, Hever Castle Lake
- 24 Billingham Lake, Udimore
- 25 Saunders Gravel Pit, Rye Harbour
- 26 Blackwall Bridge, Eastern Rother
- 27 River Brede, Brede Bridge
- 28 West Arm, Royal Military Canal
- 29 Eastern Rother, Newenden
- 30 Eastern Rother, Bodiam
- 31 Eastern Rother, Udiam
- 32 Eastern Rother, Salehurst
- 31 River Medway, Yalding
- 34 Eastern Rother, Robertsbridge
- 35 River Rother, Penshurst
- 37 Lady Cross Farm
- 38 Chiddingstone, Vexour Bridge
- 39 Fordcombe
- 40 Gotwick Manor, Hammerwood
- 41 Gedges Lakes, Paddock Wood
- 42 River Beult, Hunton
- 43 River Teise, Laddingford
- 44 River Medway, East Peckham
- 45 River Beult, Elphicks Farm
- 46 Royal Military Canal, Allington Lock
- 47 Leybourne Lakes, Larkfield
- 49 Mote Park, Maidstone
- 50 Lake, Hollingbourne
- 51 Walland Marsh
- 52 River Medway, Teston
- 53 River Medway, Maidstone
- 54 Aldington Lake, Aldington
- 55 Montral Park, Chipstead
- 56 Royal Military Canal, Bilsington
- 57 River Stour, Wye
- 58 Eastern Rother, Newbridge
- 59 Royal Military Canal, Cliff Marsh Farm
- 60 Bewl Water
- 61 Ash Lake, Fleet Farm
- 62 Stone Castle, Greenhithe
- 63 Singleton Lake, Ashford
- 64 Wierton Reservoir
- 65 River Tillingham, Rye
- 66 River Brede, Rye
- 67 Royal Military Canal, Gigger's Green
- 68 River Wantsum
- 69 River Beult, Staplehurst
- 70 River Medway, Upnor
- 71 River Teise, Mardens
- 72 Linton Park
- 73 Plucks Gutter
- 74 Bay Pond, Godstone
- 75 Hedgecourt Lake, Felbridge
- 76 Ford Manor, Dormansland
- 77 Kidbrooke Farm, Forest Row
- 78 Pattenden, Marden
- 79 Park Farm, Frittchden
- 80 Marden Torhorn, Marden
- 81 Reading Street Sewer, Appledore
- 82 Bog Lake, Leybourne
- 83 Lakes, Larkfield
- 84 Westbere Lakes, Sturry
- 85 Eastern Rother, Newenden
- 86 Brooklands Lakes, Dartford
- 87 River Teise, Bocking Fold
- 88 Iden Wood Fishery, Rye

- 89 Ponds, Middle Stoke
- 90 Lesser Teise, Hunton
- 91 River Medway, Unicomes Lande
- 92 Gravelly Ways, Laddingford
- 93 Imberhorne Pond
- 94 Grove Ferry
- 95 Abbey Court, Maidstone
- 96 Sutton at Hone
- 97 Lakes, Horton Kirby

- 98 Cromwell Hall, East Grinstead
- 99 River Beult, Sweetlands
- 100 Blue Lake, Northfleet
- 101 Clubbs Pit, Darent
- 102 Fordwich Lake, Canterbury
- 103 Eastern Rother, Etchingham
- 104 Vinehall Lake, Whatlington
- 105 Sykes Pond, Deal
- 106 River Eden, Barrows Green

- 107 Lakes, Fordwich
- 108 Bramleye Pond, Ashurst
- 109 Ruxley Gravel Pits, St Pauls
- 110 White Hart Lake, Guestling
- 111 Eastern Rother, Wittersham
- 112 Romney Marsh
- 113 Wallard Marsh

Data compiled from 1996 Agency water related survey



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend: — Main River ◆ Coarse Fishing Sites
 ◡ Area Boundary ○ Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 427700
 metres : metres



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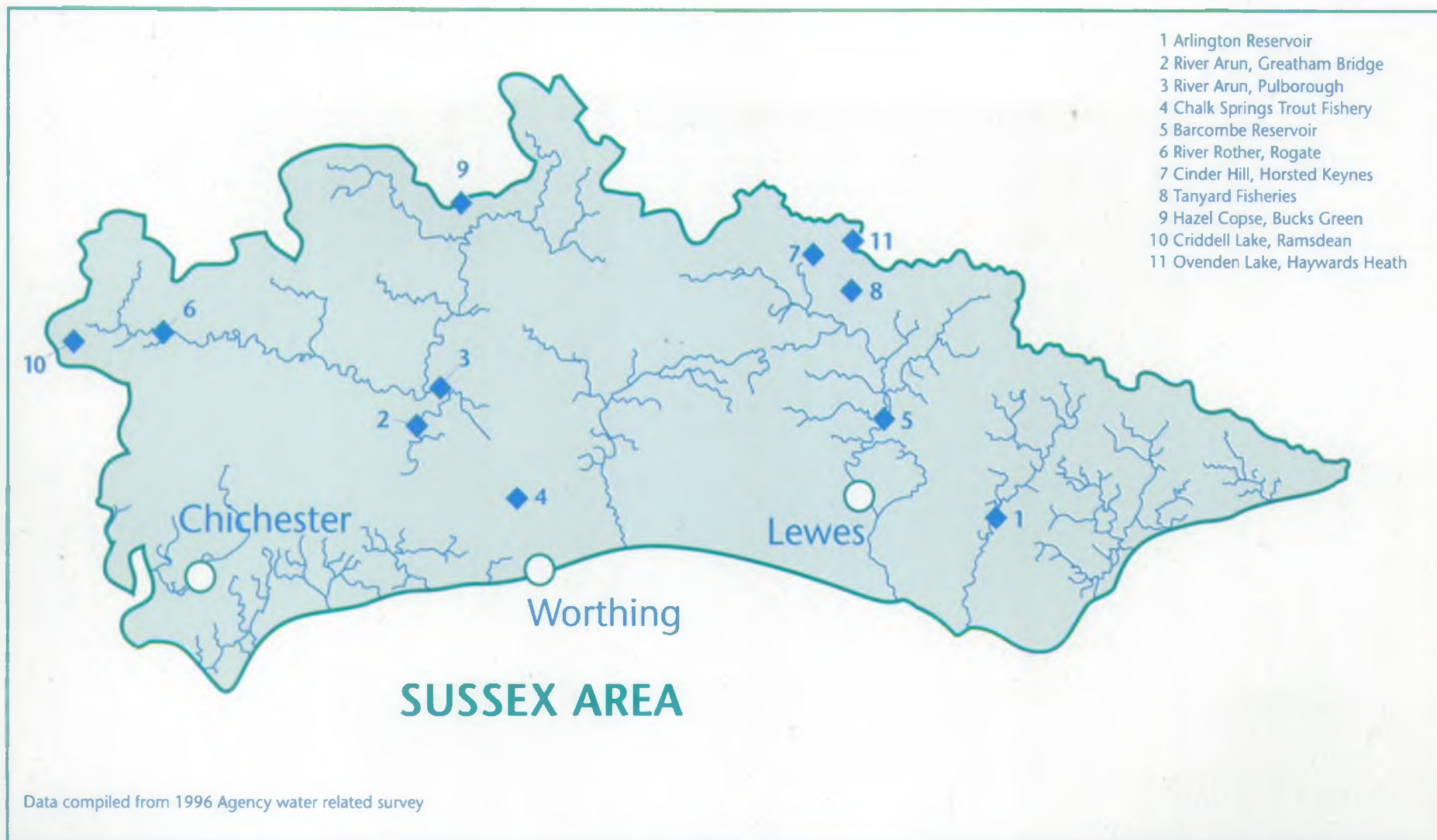
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PRINCIPAL COARSE FISHING LOCATIONS IN KENT

Appendix 7



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:

— Main River ◆ Game Fishing Sites
 Area Boundary ○ Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 426200
 metres : metres



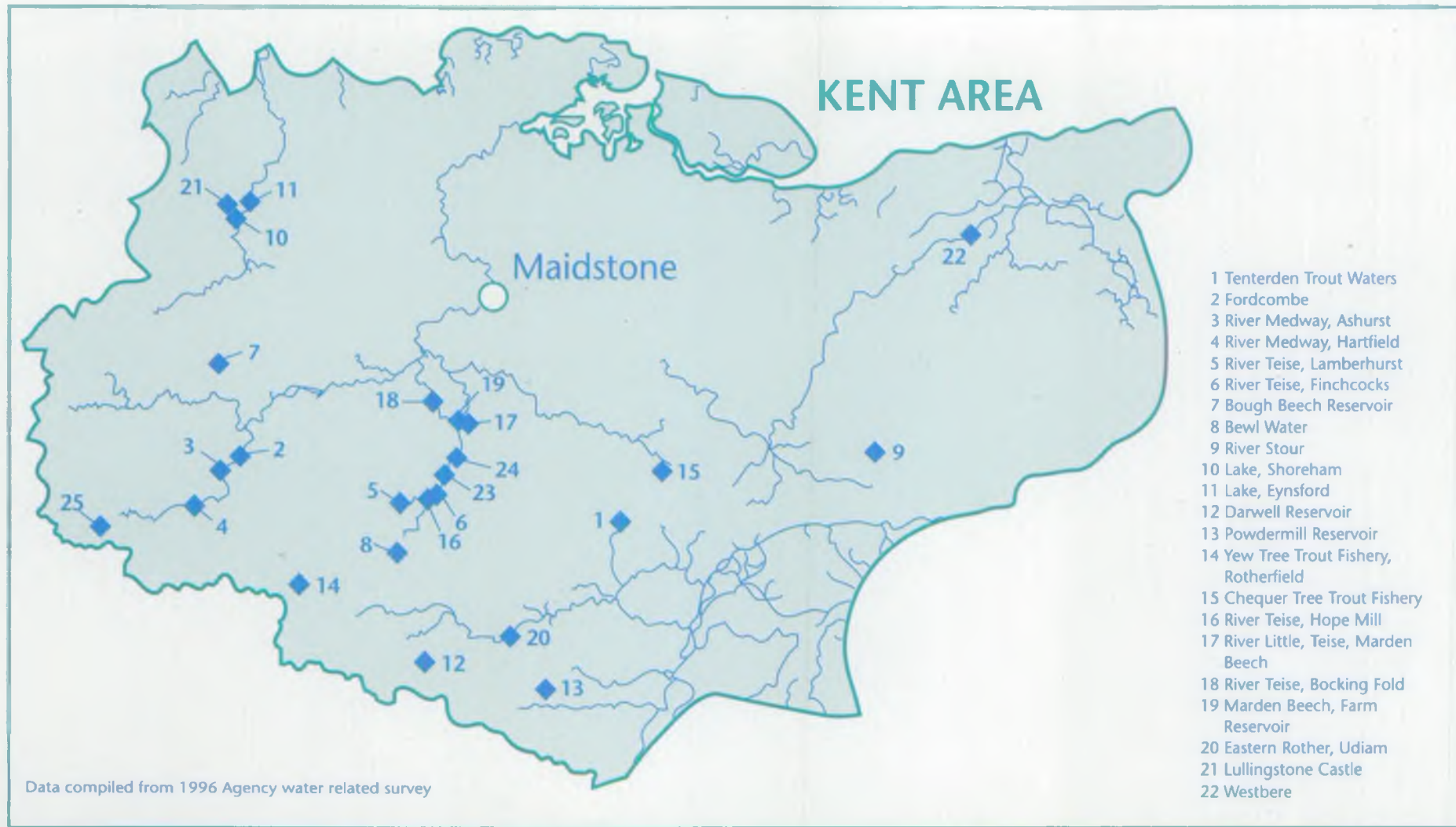
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PRINCIPAL GAME FISHING LOCATIONS IN SUSSEX



Legend:

- Main River
- Game Fishing Sites
- Area Boundary
- Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 478600
 metres : metres



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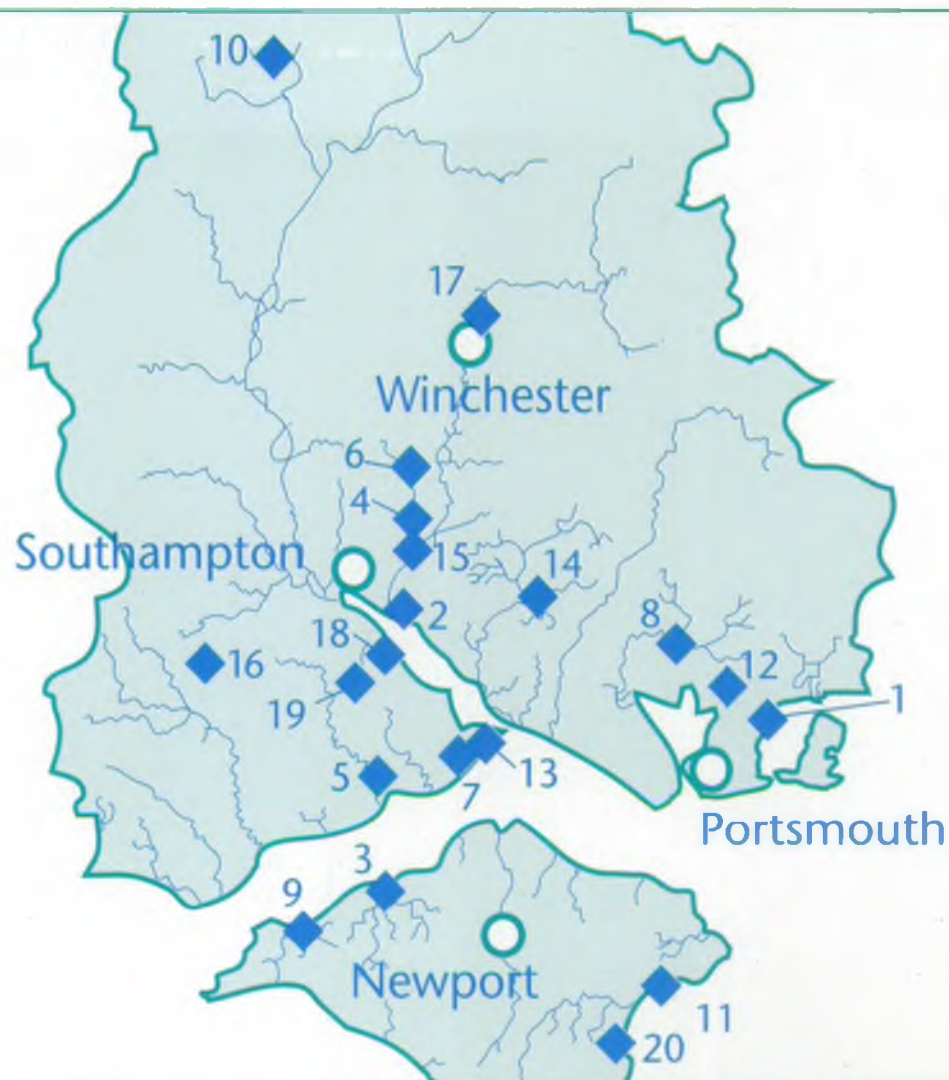
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PRINCIPAL GAME FISHING LOCATIONS IN KENT

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT AREA

- 1 Hampshire Outdoor Centre – Portsmouth
- 2 River Itchen, Itchen Bridge
- 3 Newtown Harbour
- 4 Woodmill, Swayling
- 5 Buckler's Hard
- 6 Lakeside, Eastleigh
- 7 Calshot
- 8 Porchester Marina
- 9 River Yar
- 10 Charlton Lakes
- 11 Yaverland
- 12 Portsmouth
- 13 Calshot Activities Centre
- 14 River Hamble
- 15 River Itchen, Cobden Bridge
- 16 Lyndhurst
- 17 River Itchen, Winchester
- 18 Hythe Marina
- 19 Applemore
- 20 Dunroamin

Data compiled from 1996 Agency water related survey



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:



Main River

Area Boundary



Canoeing Sites



Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 435700
metres : metres



NORTH

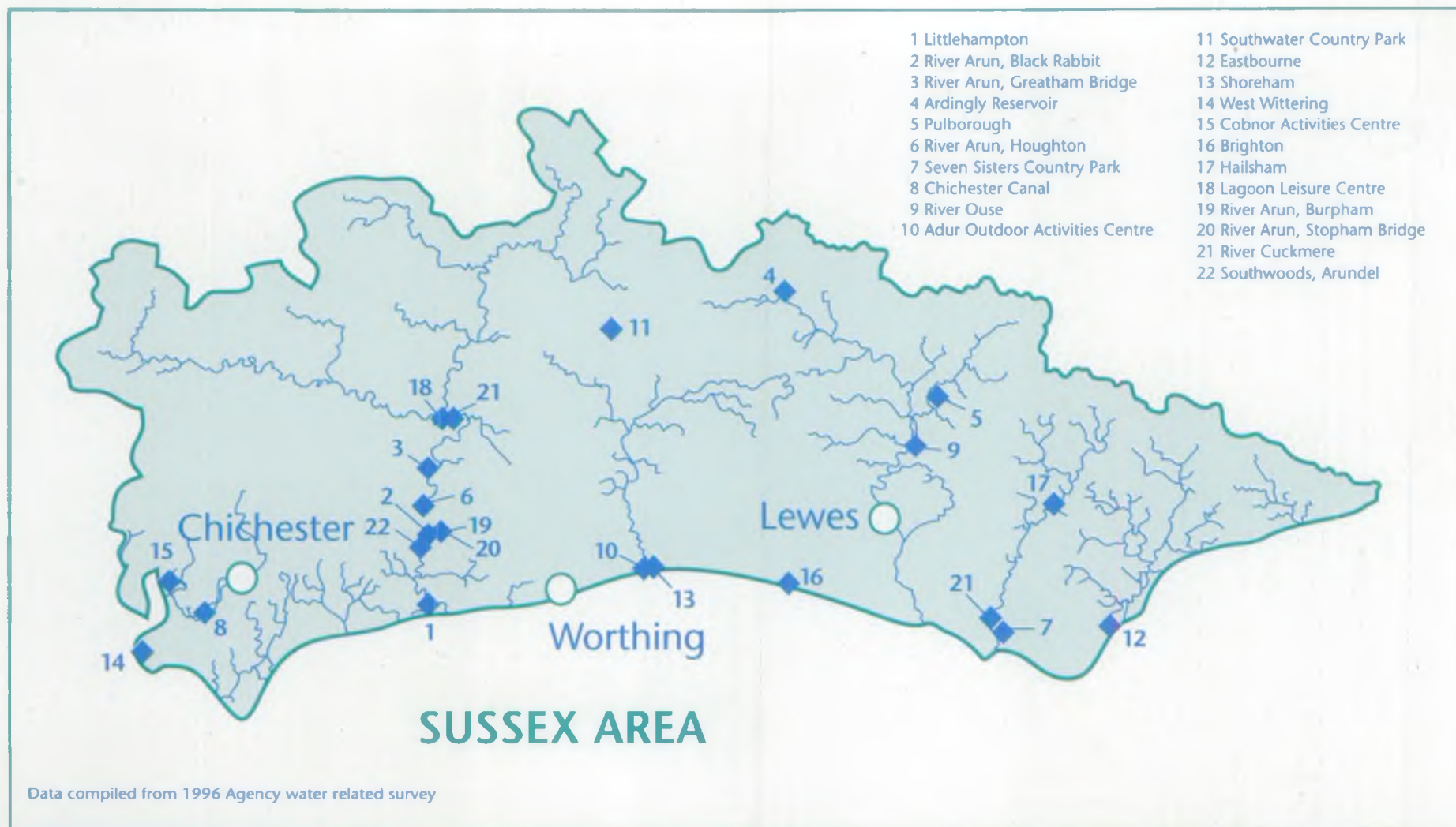
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PRINCIPAL CANOEING SITES IN HAMPSHIRE



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:

Main River



Canoeing Sites



Area Boundary



Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 453600
metres : metres

NORTH

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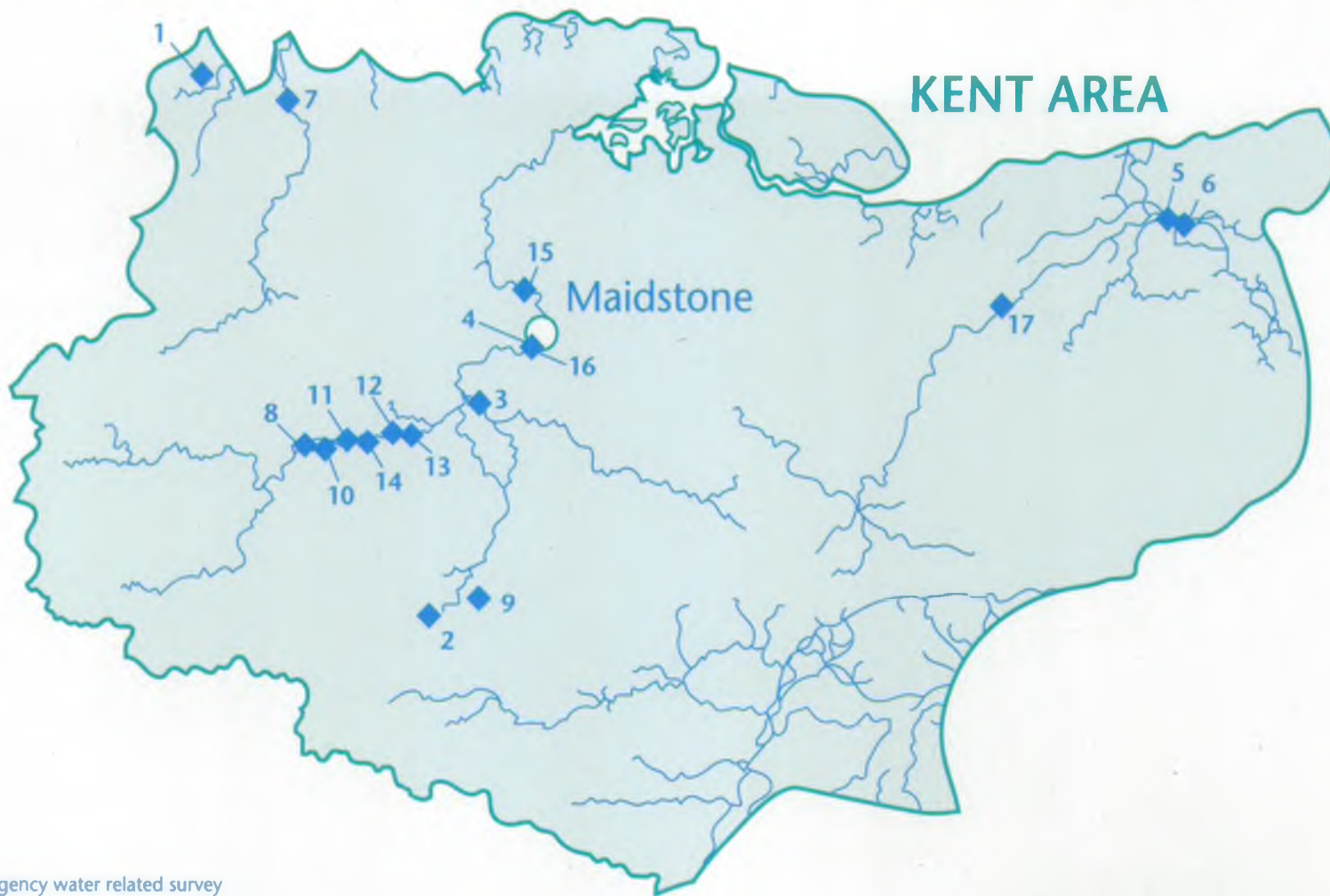
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PRINCIPAL CANOEING LOCATIONS IN SUSSEX

KENT AREA

- 1 Danson Park
- 2 Bewl Water
- 3 River Medway, Yalding
- 4 River Medway, Maidstone
- 5 River Wantsum
- 6 Plucks Gutter
- 7 Brooklands Lakes, Dartford
- 8 River Medway, Tonbridge Park
- 9 Goudhurst
- 10 River Medway, Town Lock Tonbridge
- 11 River Medway, Eldridges Lock
- 12 River Medway, East Lock
- 13 River Medway, Oak Lock Weir
- 14 River Medway, Porters Sluice
- 15 River Medway, Allington Lock
- 16 River Medway, Mill Meadow
- 17 River Stour, Chartham Hill



Data compiled from 1996 Agency water related survey



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:

	Main River		Canoeing Sites
	Area Boundary		Towns/Cities

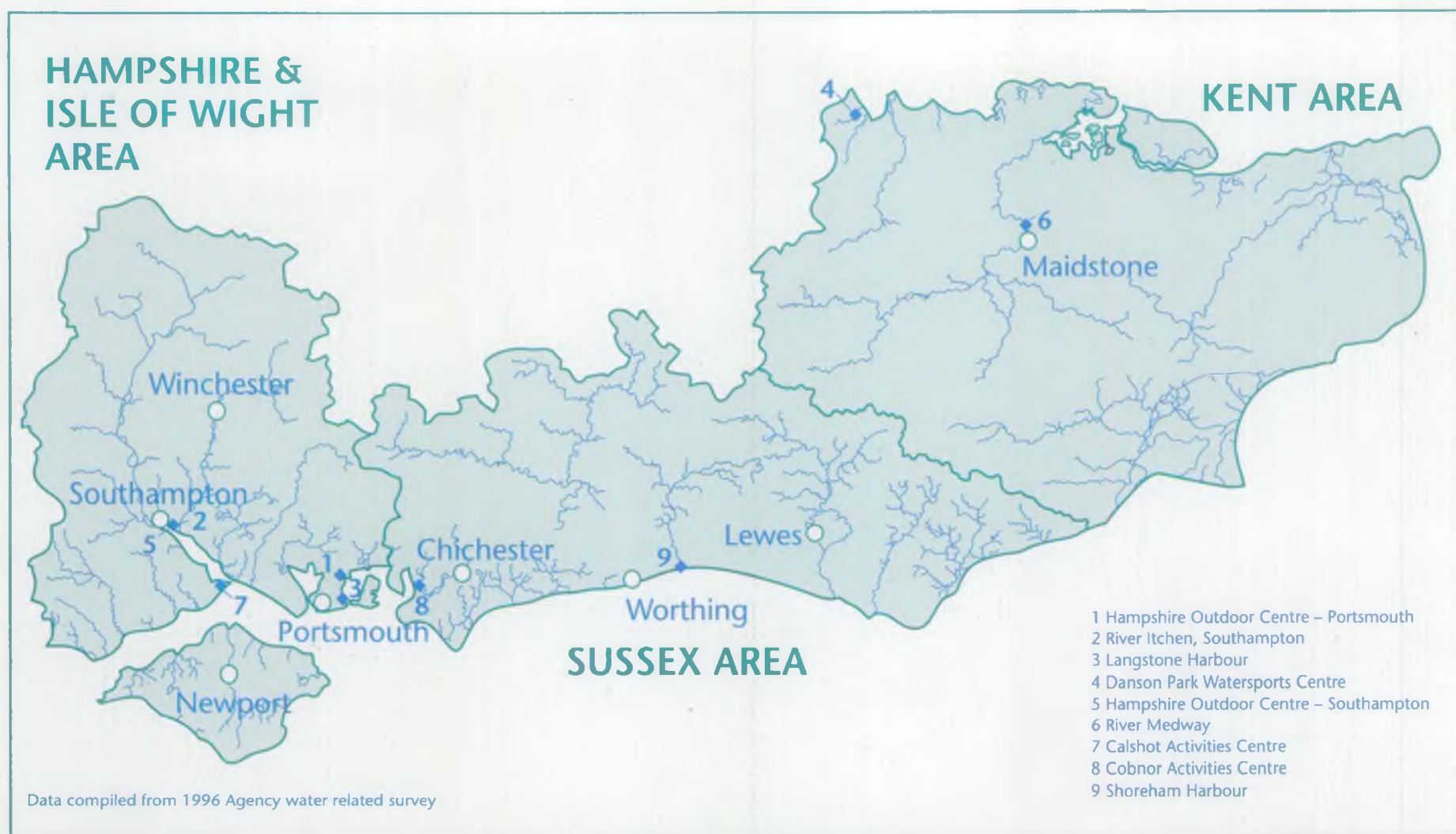
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PRINCIPAL CANOEING LOCATIONS IN KENT



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:

- Main River
- Area Boundary
- Power Boating Sites
- Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 186400
metres : metres



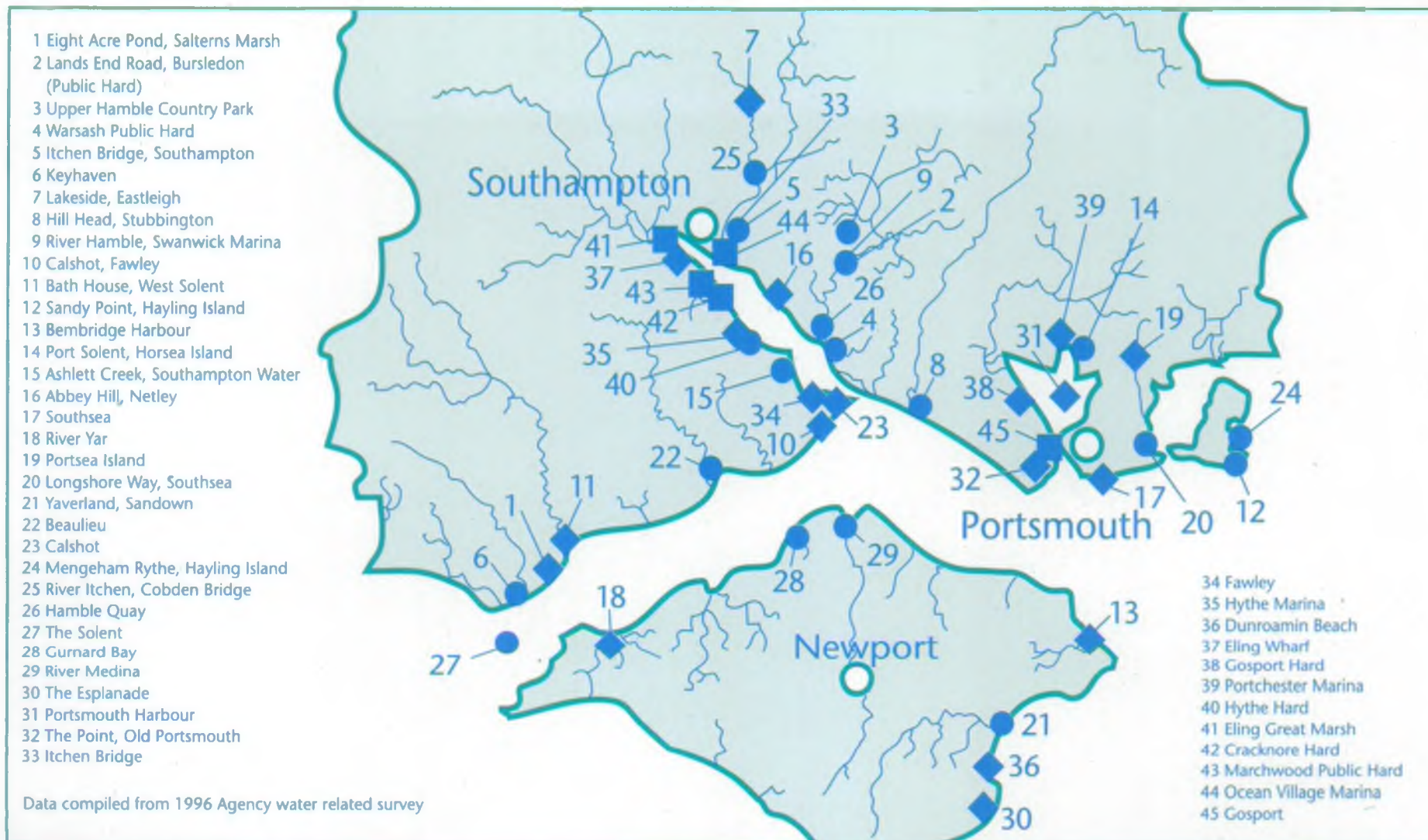
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PRINCIPAL POWER BOATING SITES IN SOUTHERN REGION



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

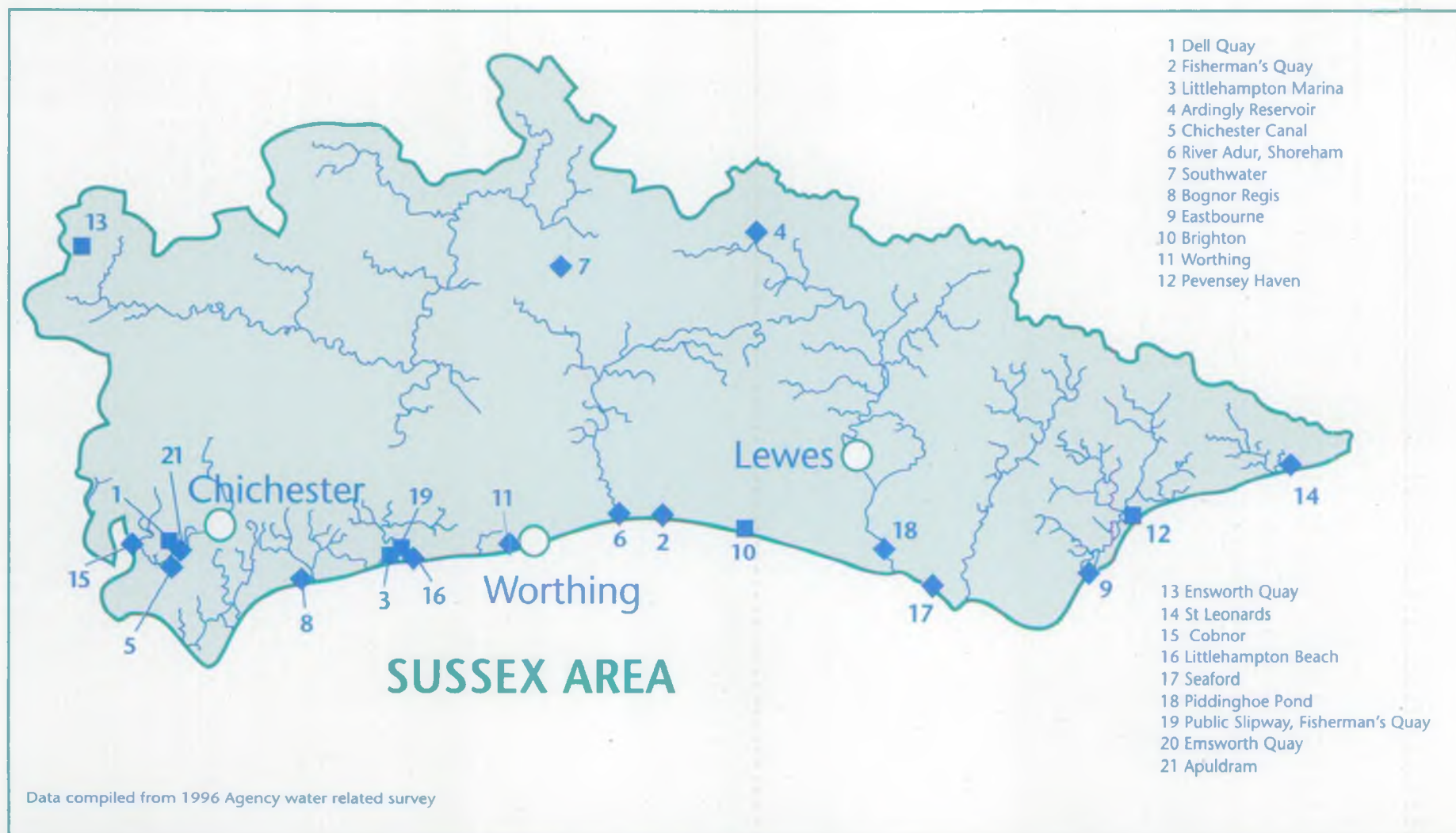
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PRINCIPAL DINGHY SAILING AND YACHTING LOCATIONS IN HAMPSHIRE



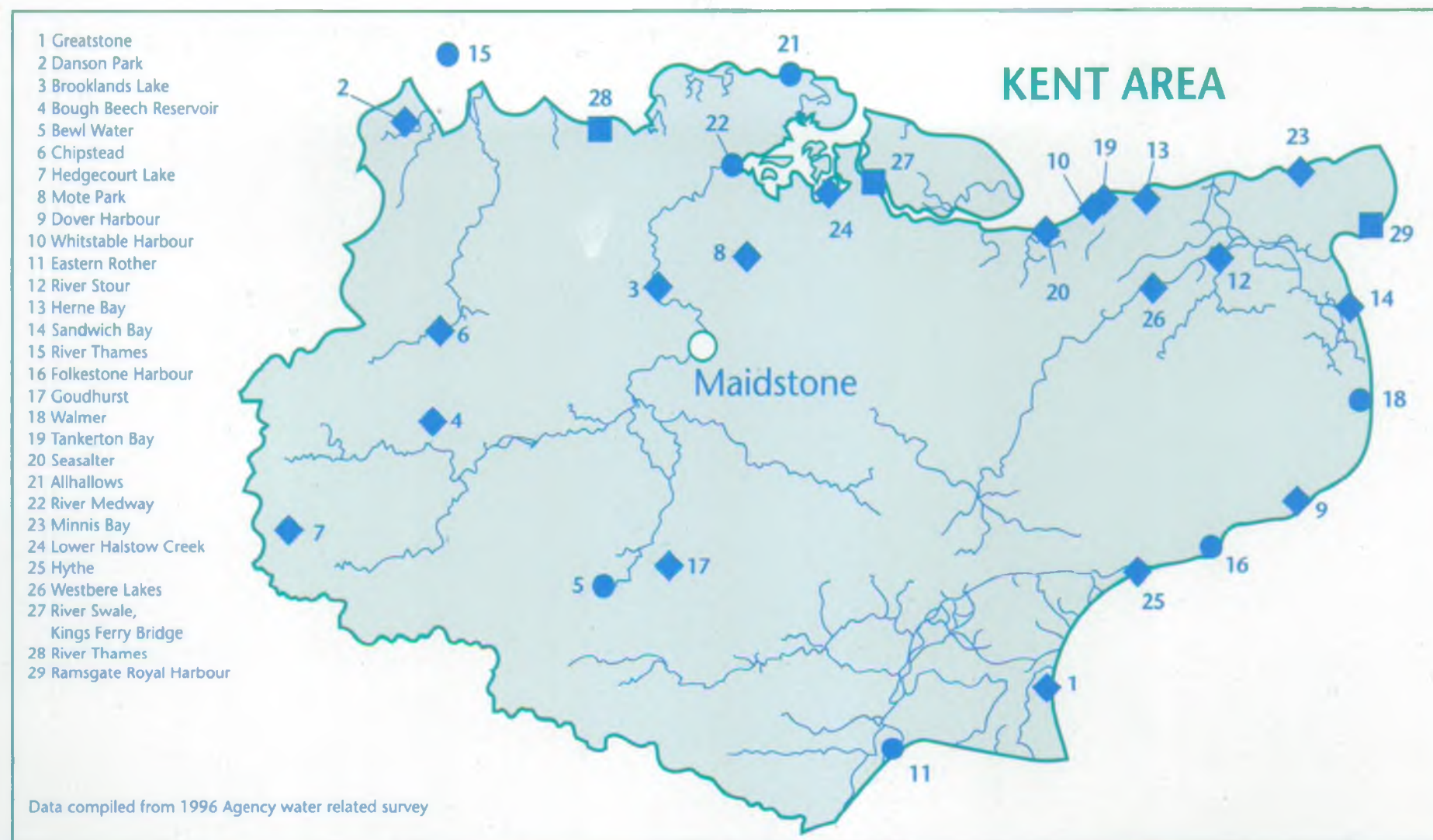
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PRINCIPAL DINGHY SAILING AND YACHTING LOCATIONS IN SUSSEX



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

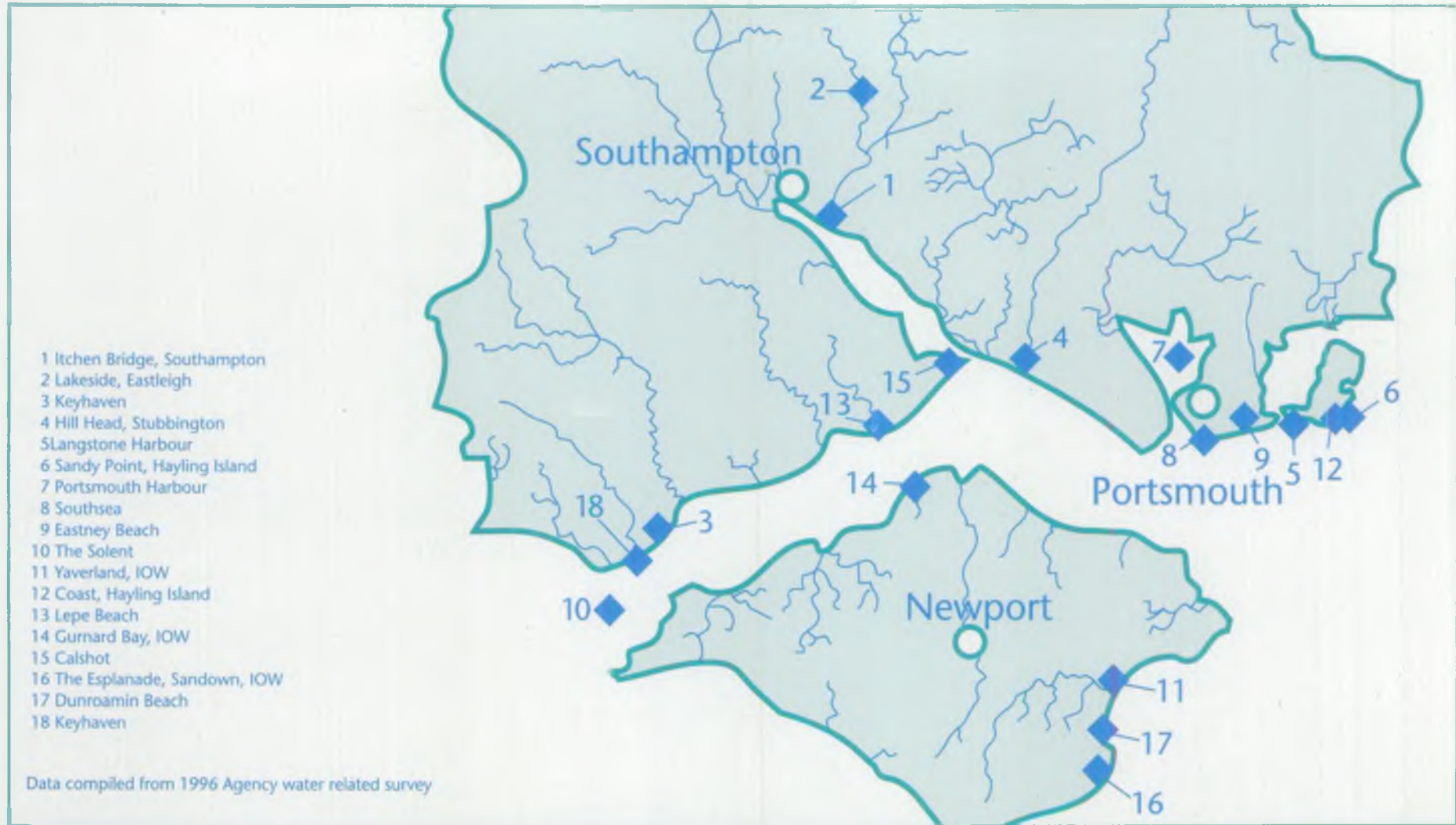
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PRINCIPAL DINGHY SAILING AND YACHTING LOCATIONS IN KENT



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

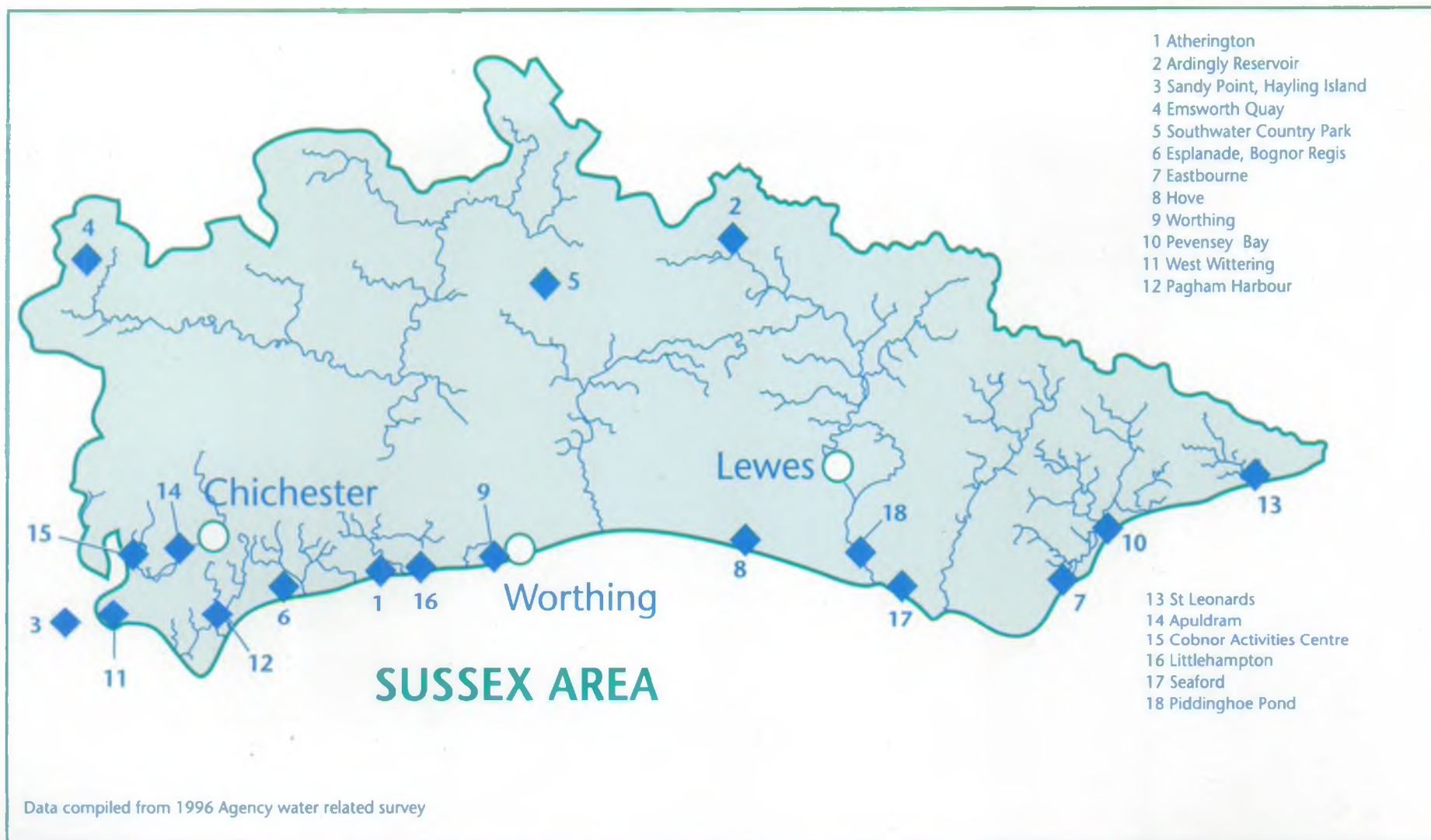
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PRINCIPAL WINDSURFING SITES IN HAMPSHIRE



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:

- Main River
- Area Boundary
- Windsurfing Sites
- Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 486900
metres : metres



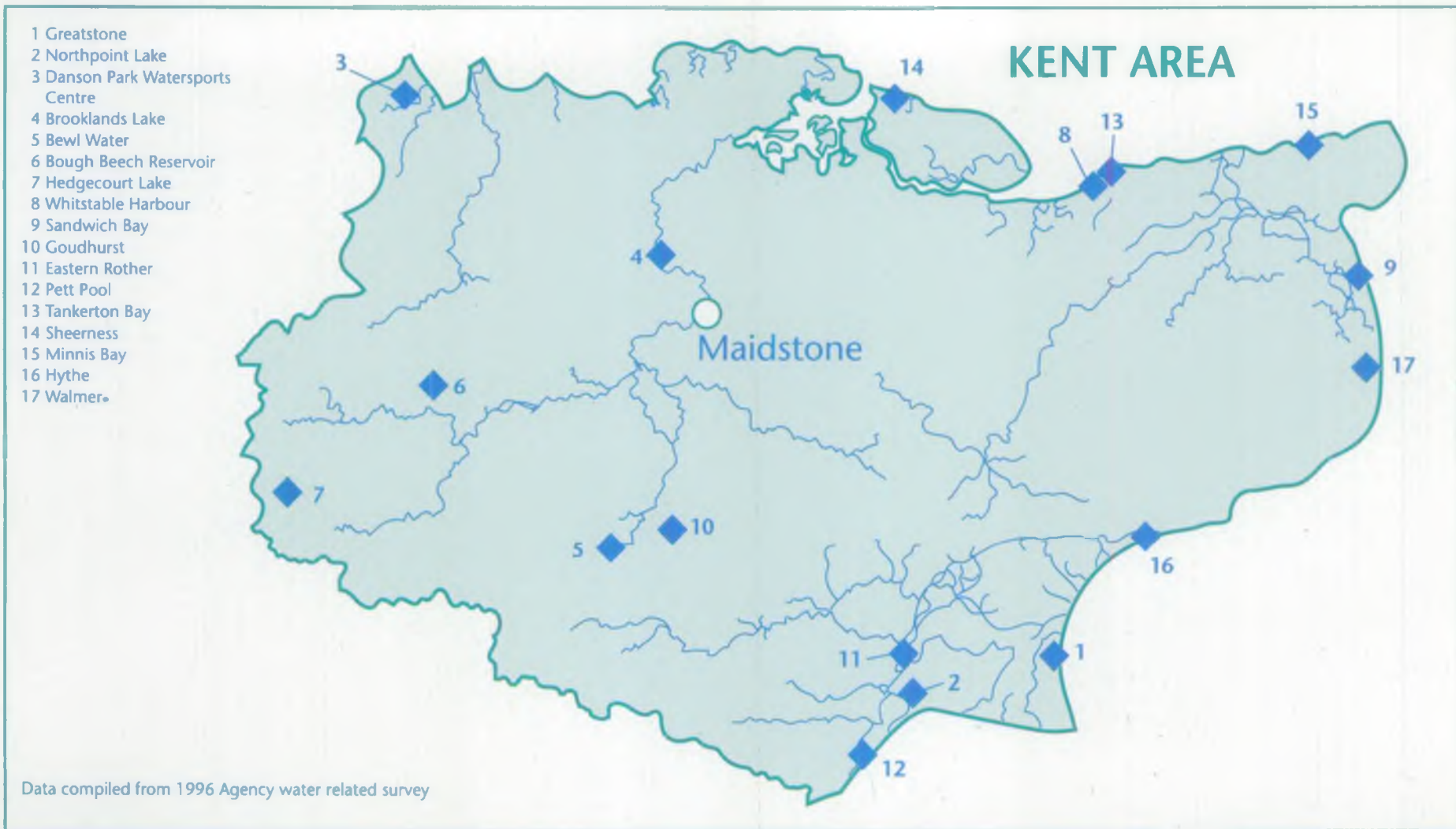
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PRINCIPAL WINDSURFING SITES IN SUSSEX



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

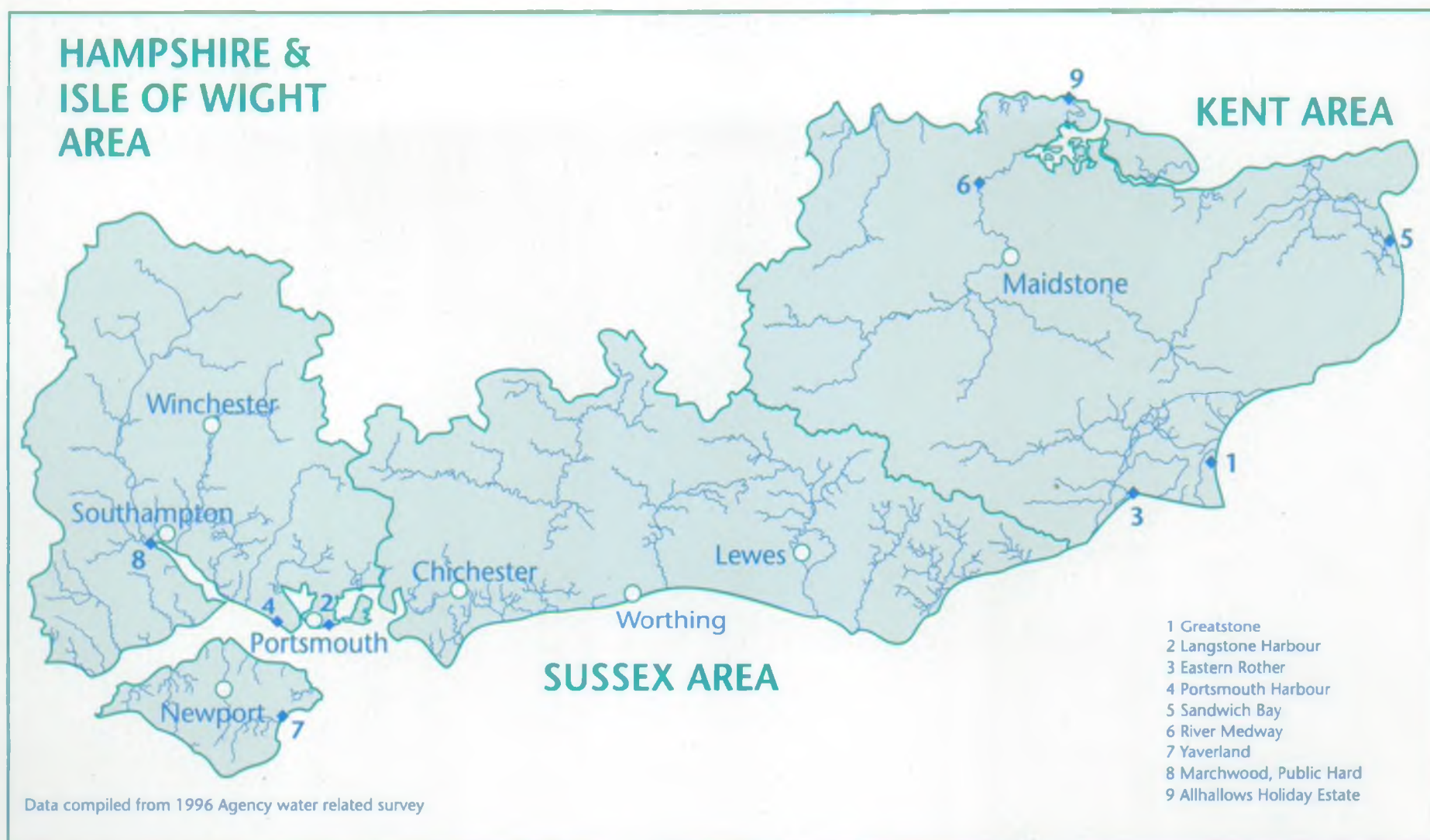
PRINCIPAL WINDSURFING LOCATIONS IN KENT

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ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:

— Main River

◆ Water Skiing Sites

Area Boundary

○ Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 934200
metres : metres



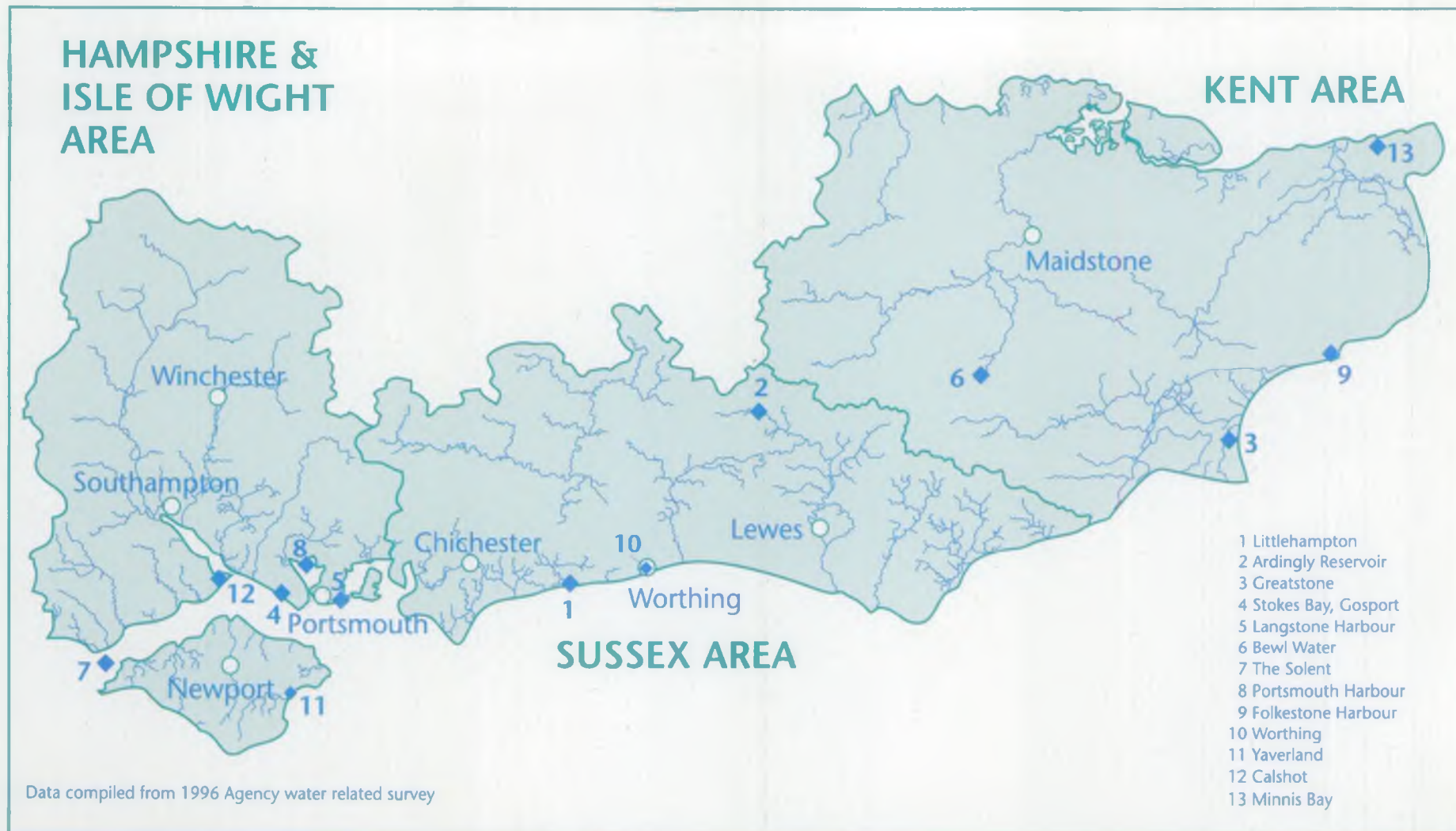
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PRINCIPAL WATER SKIING SITES IN SOUTHERN REGION



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:



Main River



Area Boundary



Sub Aqua Sites



Towns/Cities

SCALE 1: 934200
metres : metres

NORTH

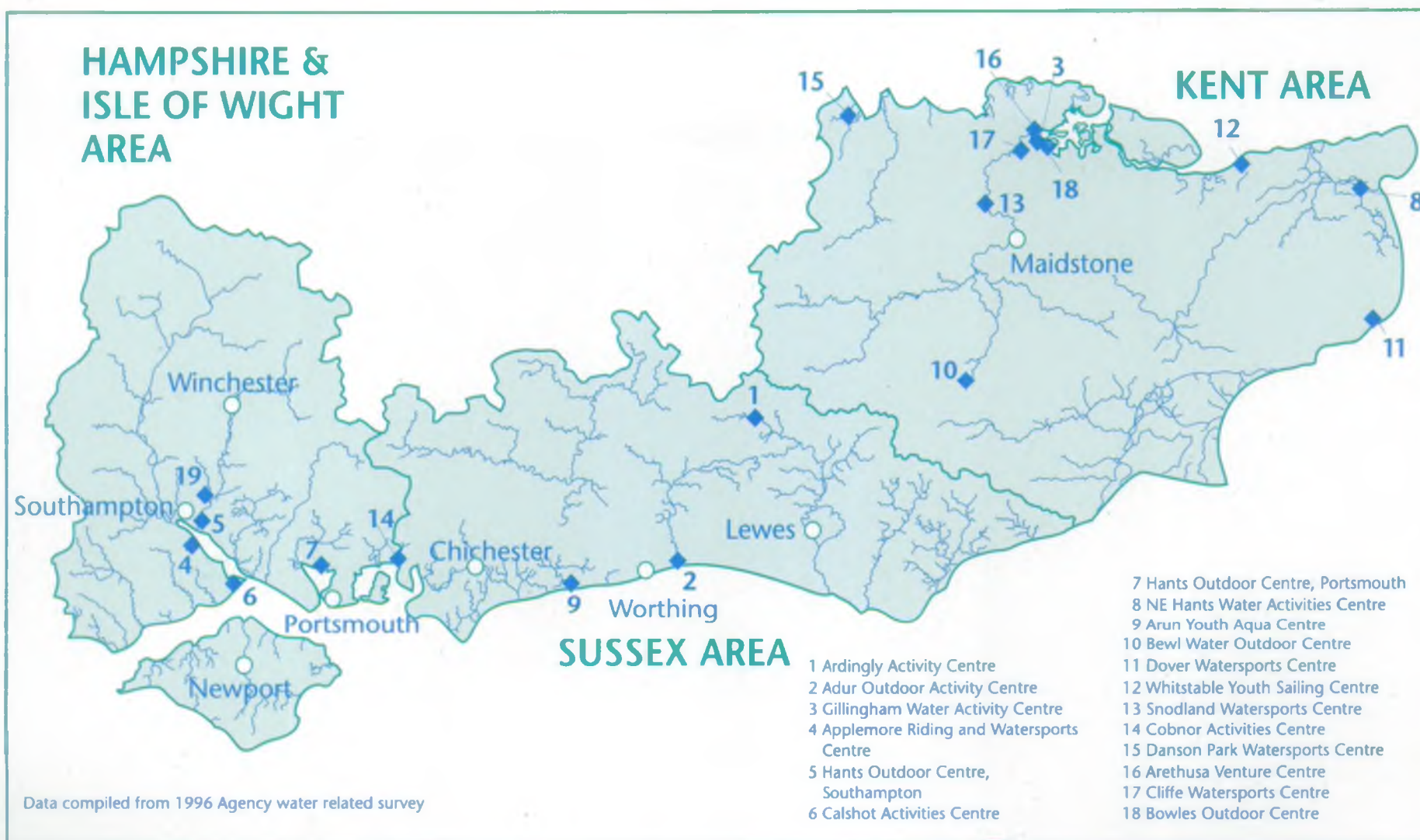
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PRINCIPAL SUB AQUA SITES IN SOUTHERN REGION



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Legend:

— Main River

◆ Activity Centres

○ Towns/Cities

Area Boundary

SCALE 1: 810800
metres : metres



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ACTIVITY CENTRES IN SOUTHERN REGION

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For general enquiries please call your local Environment Agency office. If you are unsure who to contact, or which is your local office, please call our general enquiry line.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY GENERAL ENQUIRY LINE

0645 333 111

The 24-hour emergency hotline number for reporting all environmental incidents relating to air, land and water.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY EMERGENCY HOTLINE

0800 80 70 60



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