

## 9 | Recreation & Open Space



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### 9.1 Vision

To create attractive open spaces and a range of facilities to provide for leisure and relaxation throughout Bray.

## 9.2 Context

- Wicklow County Play Policy
- County Wicklow Sports and Recreation Policy (DRAFT), 2004
- Residential Density: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoELG, 1999)
- National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
- Ready, Steady, Play-A National Play Policy

## 9.3 Strategy

The Council attaches great importance to the retention and creation of areas of recreational and amenity open space. It is important for physical and mental health that everyone, particularly children, the elderly and those with disabilities should have easy access to public open space. Attractive open space, whether or not there is public access to it, is also important for its contribution to the quality of urban life by providing important green lungs and visual breaks in built-up areas. Open space can enhance the character of residential areas and protected structures. It can also help to attract business and tourism and can contribute to the process of urban regeneration.

Recreation forms an important component of life and encompasses many activities with major land use implications. The Council recognizes the increasing concern felt by many communities that open space with recreational and amenity value should be protected from development and adequate provision made for future use.

## 9.4 Policy

### 9.4.1 The Dargle River

It is the policy of the Council to promote the use of the Dargle riverbank, between 'La Vallee' and Bray Harbour, as a leisure and natural amenity area, through the development of a Dargle River Walk. In particular, the Council will promote the area between 'The Maltings' and Bray Harbour as a focal point for leisure and recreational activities. The Council will control the location, layout and design of development that may have an adverse effect on the character, amenity and natural environment of the Dargle riverbank.

Bray is located on the River Dargle, which is an important natural amenity. As the river has a strong visual relationship with the built environment of the town, it forms an attractive setting that is rich in flora and fauna. Unfortunately, the recreational amenity and development potential of the riverbank has not yet been fully exploited and it remains an underutilised resource. The Council aims to facilitate the appropriate development of the area so that the full potential of the area can be utilised to the benefit of the town's economic, recreational and natural environment.

It is the policy of the Council to encourage the provision of pedestrian and cycle access along the Dargle Riverbank, while protecting the residential amenity of adjoining properties. The Council will reserve lands free from development to facilitate such access.

In conjunction with the relevant authorities and interest groups, the Council will seek to develop a neighbourhood park and associated leisure and play facilities as part of the Dargle River Walk. Funding for the development of the scheme shall be provided in part from Class 3 of the 'Bray Town Council Development Contribution Scheme' for the period 2004-2016.

A Dargle River Walk Management Plan will be prepared and implemented by the Council, in conjunction with all relevant authorities, interest groups and members of the public. This plan will include relevant measures that relate to the development of the walkway. This Plan will include provision for matters relating to conservation, developing amenity/recreational potential, funding, management, maintenance, security etc. In particular, the Plan will include appropriate measures to ensure that existing residential amenity of residents in the vicinity of the proposed walkway is not impinged on. The Plan will seek to develop a neighbourhood park and associated leisure and play facilities as part of the Dargle River Walk.

The Council recognises that the Dargle river bank is an important natural habitat for flora and fauna. All development that may affect these habitats will be strictly controlled so as to ensure that they are protected and enhanced.

### 9.4.2 Bray Beach and Seafront

**It is the policy of the Council to promote the use of Bray beach and the Seafront area for amenity and recreational use.**

Specific objectives relating to the promotion of Bray beach and Seafront area for amenity and recreational use are outlined in 'Chapter 11: Bray Seafront Area'.

### 9.4.3 Naylor's Cove

**It is the policy of the Council to prepare and implement a plan for the development of Naylor's Cove as a recreational amenity area, in conjunction with the relevant authorities and members of the public.**

Naylor's Cove has long been identified as an under-utilised recreational amenity asset, which has strong links to the town's primary recreational assets of Bray Seafront and Bray Head. Funding for the development of Naylor's Cove shall be provided in part from Class 3 of the 'Bray Town Council Development Contribution Scheme' for the period 2004-2016.

The Plan for the development of the Cove will include appropriate conservation provisions to ensure that its character, setting and natural and geological heritage is protected and enhanced and that the plan for development is appropriate in SAAO area.

## 9.4.4 Play Facilities

It is the policy of the Council to create a child friendly environment through the provision of safe, attractive, accessible and enjoyable play areas that are available to all children. The provision of a child friendly environment will be promoted in accordance with the Wicklow County Play Policy and 'Ready, Steady, Play-A National Play Policy'

In recognition of the fact that the natural environment is becoming less accessible to the children of the town and in acknowledgement of the importance of play for child development, the Council will implement the Wicklow County Play Policy and 'Ready, Steady, Play-A National Play Policy'. The Council will endeavour to provide additional play facilities in local neighbourhoods through the provision of additional and improved Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) and Local Areas for Play (LAPs). All play facilities must be accessible to children with disabilities.

### 9.4.4.1 Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs)

Equipped play areas will be located on sites that are easily and safely accessible, they will include at least five pieces of equipment on safety surfacing and will be surrounded by dog-proof safety open fencing. The distance between a play area and the nearest residential boundary should be a minimum of 30m/reasonable distance to avoid disturbance of nearby residence caused by users of the play areas. Areas in particular need for upgraded or new play facilities include the Fassaroe/Palermo, Fairy Hill/Ardmore/Killarney Road, Dargle, Peoples Park and Seafront Areas. These facilities will be provided in consultation with local communities and will be constructed according to the appropriate standards.

Funding for the development of play facilities shall be provided in part from Class 3 of the 'Bray Town Council Development Contribution Scheme' for the period 2004-2016.

### 9.4.4.2 Local Areas for Play (LAPs)

The issue of play is not limited to the provision of play equipment. Informal play space, such as parks, urban woodlands, green areas and natural features, such as trees and bushes are important play area for children. The Council will facilitate the provision of open space that is not laid out for defined, formal sport, recreation or play space, but is accessible, available and safe for informal use by children and adults for such purpose. The Council will require all new housing developments to provide informal open space, in appropriate locations that are overlooked by nearby housing (Refer to Section 12.3.2.2 of 'Chapter 12: Development Control Standards and Guidelines').

## 9.4.5 Open Space

It is the policy of the Council to protect, enhance and maintain existing open space. The Council will not normally permit development that will result in the loss of public or private playing fields, parks, children's play space, amenity open space or land zoned for recreational or open space purposes. The Council will provide additional public open space in appropriate locations.

Open space is essential for active and passive recreation. It contributes to the character of the town, and provides valuable green areas for wildlife corridors and habitats. Use of land, as open space is therefore no less important than other uses. It is a valuable resource and the Council attaches great importance to its retention, for once built on the value and amenity of open space is almost certainly lost to the community forever. The Council will not normally permit development that would result in a loss of open space within the Town Council, except where specifically provided for in this Development Plan.

Land has been reserved for public open space as part of the Area Action Plans for the Golf Club Lands, Harbour and North Beach area and Rehills Land.

### 9.4.5.1 E1 Zoned Solely Open Space

On E1 zoned areas, it is the policy of the Council to protect and provide for recreation, open space and amenity provision. The areas included in this zoning objective cover both private and public open space and are dispersed throughout the town. The aims of this land use zoning objective include:

- to protect and provide for recreation, open space and amenity provision;
- to protect and maintain public open space;
- to preserve private open space;
- to provide open space recreation facilities;
- to protect existing trees and natural features.

It is a policy of this Council to make a variation to the Development Plan which will zone such areas referred to in the above paragraph 'E1: Solely Open Space' and to indicate these areas on maps attached to the variation.

Open space in housing estates, designated in their respective planning permissions, which has or has not been taken in charge by Bray Town Council, cannot be built upon.

Development will not be permitted on land zoned as E1 on the east side of the Strand Road from Martello Terrace to Bray Head.

### 9.4.5.2 E3 Zoned Solely Open Space

The area included in this zoning objective is Bray Head. The zoning provides for open space provision. Existing agricultural practices will continue to be allowed and other reasonable development proposals in relation to agriculture will be considered on their merits.

### 9.4.5.3 E4 Zoned Solely Open Space

On E4 zoned land, it is the policy of the Council to preserve continuous open space along the Swan River Valley.

This zoning provides for the preservation of the open space along the river valley as well as the preservation of trees and streams.

### 9.4.6 Floodlighting of Recreational Facilities

The Council will normally only permit proposals for the floodlighting of recreational facilities where the amenities of adjacent residents will not be significantly impaired and the visual amenity and character of the locality will not be adversely affected.

### 9.4.7 Sport and Recreation

The Council will support the implementation of the 'County Wicklow Sports and Recreation Policy (DRAFT)', in co-operation with the relevant authorities.

In conjunction with the relevant authorities and interest groups, the Council will seek to develop all-weather sporting pitches adjacent to the proposed Swimming Pool site (Refer to Section 9.4.8: Bray Swimming Pool). In addition, appropriate play facilities should be provided in line with the policies outlined in 'Section 9.4.4: Play Facilities'. Funding for the development of this scheme shall be provided in part from Class 3 of the 'Bray Town Council Development Contribution Scheme' for the period 2004-2016.

The Council will work in partnership and co-operation with organisations and the community to maximise provision, maintenance and usage of sport and recreation facilities.

### 9.4.8 Bray Swimming Pool

It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the development of a swimming pool at the site adjacent to the Ballywaltrim Changing Rooms, in conjunction with the relevant authorities.

Bray has been allocated funding for the development of a swimming pool under the Local Authority Swimming Pool Programme. In addition, funding shall be provided in part from Class 3 of the 'Bray Town Council Development Contribution Scheme' for the period 2004-2016. The Council anticipates that this facility will be provided in the near future at the site identified at the Ballywaltrim Changing Rooms. The National Building Agency is currently preparing contract documents for this facility. The Council will continue to liaise with local groups and to undertake public consultation to develop the facility.