

Leisure and the Visitor Economy Sector Analysis:

The Deepings today is a pleasant place to visit and for local people to enjoy. The river Welland is an attractive attribute and the area has a lot of heritage interest. Pubs, Cafés and Restaurants are plentiful and the area hosts a significant number of successful events which entertain locals and draw in visitors. The size and variety of the retail area is probably below the critical mass required to attract visitors specifically for a day's shopping. Likewise, the current Wednesday market is too small to be a draw for visitors but does serve the local community. Other attractions include the Deepings Nature Reserve, the Leisure Centre and the various Sports Clubs. In addition, there are three Gyms, (one located within the Leisure Centre), Dance Studios, numerous activities and classes held at the Community Centre and Village Halls plus services offered by various Health and Wellbeing practitioners which result in people visiting the area from nearby communities.

The area prides itself in the community spirit and the number of events that take place. There are a huge number of smaller events throughout the year, but the more significant ones are as follows: The Deepings Carnival, The Deepings Raft Race, The Dog show, The Duck Derby, several beer festivals, (in particular, the one held by the Deepings Rugby Club is huge), a Christmas Market, a Bi-annual Literary Festival, The Rose and Sweet Pea Show, St Guthlacs Church Fete, the Deepings Business Awards and The Summer Ball.

There has been a decrease in recent years in the number of places for visitors to stay with the loss of several B&Bs and the closure of a hotel, although this has been somewhat offset by the emergence of a very small number of Air B&B. The only hotel in Deeping now is the Deeping Stage with twelve rooms. There are two B&Bs within walking distance of Market Deeping Town Centre and a small number of others within a short drive. For those with touring caravans or motor homes visiting the area, there are three caravan sites and a little further afield, Tallington Lakes provides both touring van spaces and the ability to rent log cabins as well as offering various sporting and leisure activities.

There are no golf courses in the Deepings but there is a small 9-hole course at Maxey and full-sized courses at Toft, Peterborough, Stamford and Thorney, all within a 30-minute drive.

Fishing is available with a permit on the River Welland and at some of the nearby lakes.

There are numerous footpaths, some attractive by the river but many crossing flat arable farm land are less scenic. Due to the abundance of arable farming in the areas around the Deepings there are few wooded areas. The land is also quite flat which is advantageous for some activities but may not appeal to some visitors.

Market Deeping has a large public park called the John Eve field which has a large open grassy area, a children's playground and a BMX bike track. Deeping St James has a similar facility, without the BMX track at Thackers Way, recently renamed Jubilee Park where a trim trail has recently been added by a community group. It also has a smaller park called Woody Heights which boasts a Skate board park and a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area). Smaller play areas can also be found in Market Deeping at The Cherry Tree Park off Church Street and on the new housing development behind Tesco. Deeping St. James has further park facilities in a play area next to the Priory Church.

Cycling is a popular activity and there are a few cycle lanes and routes in the area, but in many places cyclists must share the road with other vehicles. The Peterborough Green Wheel, (cycle route) passes nearby.

Sporting clubs include some with their own premises and others that share or hire venues. The ones with their own premises are: Deepings Rugby Club, Deeping Rangers Football Club, Deeping Cricket Club, Deeping Tennis Club, Deeping Snooker Club, The Spin Room (indoor cycling) and two Bowls Clubs. Using venues as needed are clubs including: Badminton, Swimming, Hockey, Marshall Arts, Darts, Dancing, Walking and Exercise Classes. Of note are Deepings Swimming Club, Deeping Rangers and Deepings Rugby Club, all of which punch above their weight for a modest sized community.

For those that wish to eat and drink out, or take-away, the area is well served with four Fish & Chip Shops, (two of which are multi award winning), an Italian, four Asian restaurants and a further six takeaways, one British Restaurant, one Bistro and four pubs that provide a good choice of food, (some others offer snacks). Four pubs concentrate more on drinkers/pub games such as pool and darts. Four pubs have closed and been converted to residential use over the past 20 years and another large one is currently empty, however there has been a new wine bar open during that time as well as an American themed bar which also serves food. There are seven cafés scattered throughout the area where breakfasts, lunches and afternoon teas can be served.

Within a 10 minute car drive there are a handful of Villages, many of which also have good local pubs providing a good selection of food.

On the outskirts of Deeping St James there is the Exotic Pet Refuge which although only open around 6 days a year, draws in visitors from both the local community and further afield. Close to the Exotic Pet Refuge is "Deeping Lakes" nature Reserve which is a large area offering walking and bird-watching opportunities.

Deeping Leisure Centre

It is recognised that the Deepings Leisure centre is in dire need of refurbishment or replacement but the authors of this report are aware that a project is underway by SKDC to provide a new Leisure centre for the Deepings and its plans and location are likely to be decided before the neighbourhood Plan is ratified. Thus it has been decided at this stage to exclude detailed proposals for the leisure centre. The NP team have provided input to SKDC regarding the new centre. Amongst these proposals is the need to recognise that the new leisure centre is serving a much larger community than the old one was designed for and thus scale and scope should be proportional to the population increase. The Deepings swimming club is incredibly successful, punching well above its weight and a pool suitable for their use should be provided, a competition sized pool would bring swimming events to the Deepings. The opportunity should be taken to provide a large function facility, flexible enough to cater of a variety of uses including weddings, conferences and concerts. At the moment many functions have to be held outside of the Deepings due to lack of a suitable venue.