



A manifesto for the industry

From the British Holiday & Home Parks
Association



The UK caravan park and campsite sector - a Government partner for growth, particularly in rural and coastal communities:

- **£12.2bn visitor expenditure**
- **£7.2bn GVA**
- **Supporting 226,745 jobs**



Executive Summary

The British Holiday & Home Parks Association (BH&HPA) is the national trade body for holiday and residential parks in the United Kingdom. Our members operate more than 3,000 parks across the UK.

Holiday Parks

The United Kingdom's holiday park and campsite sector generated £12.2bn in visitor spend in 2022-2023. This equated to £7.2bn Gross Value Added to the UK economy, and supported 226,745 full time equivalent jobs.

The majority of holiday parks are located in rural and coastal communities across Great Britain and Northern Ireland. With many high streets facing decline, holiday parks help sustain local economies and bring vital tourism spend to some of the UK's most economically challenged areas.

By providing an alternative to the letting of residential properties in popular tourist destinations, the parks sector protects local housing markets while supporting nearby businesses that depend on holidaymakers.

Growing the UK's domestic tourism offer will encourage more people to invest in holidays closer to home.

Residential Parks

Residential parks provide homes in attractive green settings to around 159,000 people in England alone. They provide ideal single-storey accommodation for older living, in areas where there is often a shortage of bricks and mortar homes. They also foster a strong sense of community among residents.

As policymakers look to address the acute shortage of housing right across the country, residential parks provide an opportunity to support the national housing agenda.

Partnering with Government

BH&HPA has developed this manifesto on behalf of the parks industry. It identifies four key areas where we will partner with Government to increase investment and growth in rural and coastal communities across the UK:

- Planning – reforming the planning system to recognise the role residential park homes play in providing local housing choice.
- Taxation – creating a fair tax and competitive environment that promotes domestic tourism.
- Employment – addressing skills gaps in rural and coastal communities to provide long-term employment opportunities.
- Energy – expanding grid capacity to enable the parks sector to embrace sustainable technologies such as heat pumps and Electric Vehicles.

We believe that by working with us on these four themes, the next Government can support a thriving holiday and residential parks sector that will provide more homes, more environmentally friendly domestic tourism, and more economic opportunities for rural and coastal communities across the UK.



Debbie Walker
Director General, BH&HPA

Planning: A system that supports park living

We will work with Government to:

- Recognise the role park homes can play in providing local housing choice within the planning system in England.
 - Ensure planning authorities are properly resourced to uphold best practice, and support the park homes sector.
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Why...

For thousands of people, security, peace of mind and a delightful living environment are just some of the benefits of park home living. Park homes offer good quality single-storey accommodation that can be made available far quicker and more affordably than traditional housing. Residential parks often serve communities in areas of high house prices where there is a shortage of traditional homes.

By providing a desirable housing option for older people looking to downsize, residential park homes also play a vital role in freeing up bricks and mortar housing stock. As Government looks to address the acute shortage of housing in many parts of the UK, residential parks provide an opportunity to support the national housing agenda.

Despite this, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not currently recognise the role that residential park homes already play in providing an alternative housing option. When new developments are planned and land allocated for residential usage, the presumption is that this will take the form of bricks and mortar homes. While understandable, it should be recognised that residential parks often have an important role to play in meeting local housing need.

Instead, the NPPF could be reformed to require local authorities to consider the provision of park homes when producing Local Plans and assessing local housing stock needs. This would encourage further investment into the sector and help existing parks that wish to expand to do so, thus extending the opportunity of cost-effective park home ownership to more people whilst freeing up brick and mortar stock.

Equally, by improving local authorities' capacity to perform their planning and licensing obligations, councils will be better able to regulate the parks sector and be more consistent in their approach to enforcement where this is needed.

"At Warfield Park we have long sought to foster a sense of community by working with our long-established community association, for the betterment of the Park as a whole. Many of our residents have taken the opportunity to sell their existing family homes to purchase a home at Warfield Park and use the capital released from that sale to enjoy a retirement and lifestyle they may otherwise not have been able to have. As many of our residents are older, many benefit from having access to a home that is single storey and can be adapted to their needs as they grow older."

- James Sumner, Warfield Park, Berkshire



Residential parks provide homes to around 159,000 people in England alone.

They provide excellent accommodation for older living and foster a strong sense of community.



The Spar and Post Office - a facility for locals as well as holiday makers, at Golden Cap Holiday Park, West Dorset.

deock Stores

SPAR



POST OFFICE

illed beers & wines
ews & magazines
sandwiches & snacks
ot & cold drinks
eals for tonight



Taxation: A fairer tax environment to support local business and green tourism

We will work with Government to:

- Create a fair and competitive tax environment that promotes domestic tourism and recognises the value the sector brings to small businesses and local high streets in rural and coastal communities across the country.
 - Ensure taxation and levies support investment and growth in the holiday parks sector.
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Why...

Holiday parks are true place-based businesses. Many holiday parks are long-standing core contributors to their communities, supporting the local economy and delivering footfall for neighbouring businesses such as cafes, restaurants, shops and pubs. Ensuring that a fair and competitive tax regime is in place for the holiday parks sector is key to driving growth and opportunity in rural and coastal areas.

In 2023, visitors to UK holiday parks and campsites stayed 82% longer and spent 12% more than the national tourism average. The sector supports approximately 226,745 full time equivalent jobs, many of which are in areas with limited employment opportunities. These figures show that holiday parks and campsites are net contributors to the UK's tourism industry.

Where successful holiday park businesses operate, local high streets have been regenerated, with post offices, bakeries, and local shops able to re-open, serving not just visitors but the local community too. A competitive tax environment will be crucial for local businesses to play their role in contributing to the regeneration of Britain's towns and communities, through stimulating footfall and visitor spend across local economies. A fairer tax environment for holiday accommodation, that is in alignment with our European competitors, would also support and reflect the Government's ambition to drive economic growth across all corners of the country.

A fair and competitive tax environment would not only boost local economies but would also secure the long-term attractiveness of domestic tourism. Ensuring that taxation is weighted fairly for tourist accommodation providers will play an essential role in the promotion of more sustainable holiday choices.

Case study: Local bakery saved from closure

"Our holiday park business has recently purchased the building that houses the local bakery, which may otherwise have closed, in High Bentham. This ensures that holidaymakers still enjoy the best that our local area has to offer. Many park businesses like mine are pillars of their local community, supporting local high streets, neighbouring businesses and local events."

- Thomas Marshall, Riverside Park, North Yorkshire



Employment: Investing in the skilled workforce of the future

We will work with Government to:

- Establish a taskforce to specifically address the skills gap in rural and coastal communities.
- Reform the Apprenticeship Levy to give the hospitality sector more flexibility, allowing the sharing of apprentices between smaller employers and introducing a modular option.

Why...

The tourism sector continues to be impacted by a major skills shortage for a number of key roles. Holiday parks, hotels, restaurants, pubs and attractions all report difficulty in recruiting skilled workers such as chefs, cleaners, wardens and grounds staff.

As an industry, we stand ready to work with Government in all parts of the UK to identify the workforce areas currently difficult to recruit into. A new, dedicated rural and coastal communities' employment taskforce is needed to conduct an audit of areas struggling to recruit. Then targeted interventions could be developed by local, regional and national Government, in partnership with industry.

Support for relevant qualifications and training would allow businesses across the whole tourism industry to grow. A taskforce could utilise untapped potential in rural and coastal communities and help propel local growth and productivity.

The parks sector has a long history of offering a career change for those wanting a different path, many of whom are seeking the opportunity to work in the great outdoors. As a key rural employer, the sector is successful in retaining workers that may be looking to scale back hours before retirement.

Reforming the Apprenticeship Levy to enable smaller businesses to share apprentices would be welcomed by the parks sector, offering a richer experience to young people and a more flexible way of combining study with work.

"We have an amazing team here at Beverley Holidays. One of our keys to success is how we encourage personal development and upskill our people to retain their skills, and develop their careers with us. Our team come from a broad range of backgrounds and industries, but are united by their love of working outdoors and in a holiday environment, which provides opportunity for excellent mental wellbeing and a great work-life balance. We'd love to raise awareness of the benefits and job security our sector can offer through employment in rural and coastal areas."

- Claire Flower, Beverley Holidays, Devon





NAMASTE

My choice of
producing for healthy
food

Photovoltaics (PV) and solar thermal panels at The Quiet Site, a holiday park offering sustainable glamping, camping and touring holidays in the Lake District.



Energy: Powering our parks

We will work with Government to:

- Highlight where expanding the grid's capacity will be particularly beneficial to rural and coastal communities, allowing parks to access the power they need to support both current and future demand.
 - Actively support industry efforts to decarbonise and turbo charge the uptake of greener, sustainable technologies, such as heat pumps and electric cars.
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Why...

Holiday and residential parks across the UK are predominantly located in rural and coastal areas. While most parks maintain their own utilities networks, this infrastructure requires sufficient power from the national grid to meet consumer demand. In too many of these areas of the UK, capacity within the grid is insufficient to serve the current and future needs of a thriving parks sector; one which encourages green initiatives such as electric vehicle ownership or the wider uptake of heat pumps. Many businesses wanting to both grow and respond to changing customer demands find they are unable to do so, held back by a lack of capacity within the grid.

It is essential to transition rural communities away from carbon-based systems to cleaner, renewable technologies, ensuring that all throughout the UK can access clean, affordable electricity. Only significant investment from Government and distribution network operators can deliver the necessary infrastructure improvements that rural and remote businesses require to grow and adapt. Improvements to the long-term attainability, security and affordability of electricity will be crucial to sustaining economic growth across the country.

We can work with Government to ensure that green initiatives are accessible to the parks sector and that park home and holiday caravan owners have an equal opportunity to decarbonise. By maintaining a close dialogue with park operators, green initiatives can be designed with the sector's unique challenges in mind.

"At Findhorn Bay Holiday Park we do everything we can to have as little environmental impact as possible, always trying to do more and constantly exploring new ideas. Our electricity on the park comes from the wind turbines which power the park eco-village next door. At all other times, the energy provided from the grid uses a green energy tariff. Our premium A+ holiday caravans & eco-pods are fully powered by green energy. We are future-proofing by upcycling caravans rather than sending them to landfill, converting them from gas to electricity and investing in other eco-friendly accommodation."

-Tim Slack, Findhorn Bay Caravan Park, Morayshire



About us

The British Holiday and Home Parks Association (BH&HPA) is the national trade body for responsible holiday, touring and residential parks across the UK. Founded in 1950, the Association represents 1,700 BH&HPA members who own or manage 3,000 parks across the United Kingdom. BH&HPA provides extensive support to the sector through sharing guidance, model documents and championing best practice.

Director General: Debbie Walker



Chairman: Ian James, Owner of Coast and Country Parks



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For more information or to set up a meeting to discuss our manifesto in greater detail please email enquiries@bhpha.org.uk

To view this manifesto online please visit bhpha.org.uk/manifesto2024