

# **Statement of Community Involvement**



## **Summary of Questionnaire Responses**

During July and August 2011, the South Downs National Park Authority sent notification of its intention to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement to a wide range of Statutory and General consultees, in accordance with Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended).

A questionnaire was sent, with a covering / explanatory letter by either email or by post to over 500 organisations and individuals. The letter explained that before the SDNPA begin preparing the Statement of Community Involvement, they would like feedback from groups and individuals on how they would like to be involved with the Planning Policy and development Management Policies. The notification period ended on 15 August 2011. 104 individual responses were received.

This document provides a summary of the responses received during this notification period.

## Summary of Responses to Questionnaire

### Question 1

Respondents were asked which consultee category best describes the organisation to which you belong or the interests you are representing. The table below shows the number (and percentage) of respondents from each category. By far the largest group of respondents were from or representing public bodies, with Town and Parish Councils representing the largest group of respondents at 48% of responses. (A list of all groups or organisations which responded can be seen at Appendix 1).

Category	Business	Individual	Local Interest Group	Local/ National Gov Dept	National Interest Group	Town/ Parish Council	Other
Number	10	9	9	<b>13</b>	5	<b>51</b>	9
%	9	8	8	<b>12</b>	5	<b>48</b>	8

### Question 2

This question asked respondents how they, or their organisation would prefer to be notified when a planning document has been published. They were asked to identify their two most preferred methods. A significant majority of respondents chose email as their preferred method of notification (57%). The table below shows the number and percentage split between different methods.

Category	Email	Council Website	Press release (local newspaper)	Letter	Newsletter	Other
number	<b>94</b>	5	2	47	17	1
%	<b>57</b>	3	1	28	10	1

Whilst many respondents did provide their two preferred methods, others chose to indicate only one. Therefore whilst there were 106 respondents in total, there were only 166 methods indicated in this question.

### Question 3

This question asked how respondents or their organisations would prefer to be consulted with regards to planning policy issues. The question asked for the respondents top three methods of consultation. It also asked for these three to be ranked (3 being the highest and 1 being the lowest). The requirement to rank the methods did cause some confusion. In some cases the ranking had been done in reverse order, then crossed out, in others they had all been ranked highest and in other cases the top three methods had been ticked/crossed rather than ranked. When methods had been indicated but not ranked, all were given equal weighting and recorded as a "3". The table below shows the results of this question:

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Method	Rank			Total
	3	2	1	
Email	58	18	11	87
Letter	18	23	9	50
Questionnaire	7	9	15	31
Evening Public Meeting	9	7	14	30
Stakeholder meeting	10	9	6	25
Manned Exhibition	5	8	7	20
Newsletter	4	5	7	16
Authority Website	1	3	12	16
Daytime Public Meeting	2	7	4	13
Workshop	3	5	5	13
Unmanned exhibition	0	0	2	2
Other	0	0	6	6

Once again email was the highest ranked and most popular method, with a small number of comments suggesting an email with links to documents on the South Downs National Park Authority website. The second preferred option was consultation by letter. The use of public / stakeholder meetings was also popular, with a combined total of 55.

#### Question 4

This four part question asked respondents for examples of good consultation experiences, to enable the SDNPA to learn from existing good practise. The overwhelming majority of respondents had been involved in the planning process, covering consultations from all of the 15 authorities which fall within the National Park and others outside of the area. The top four responses were very similar to those in Question 3 (with Email, Letter, Public Meeting and Workshop being the most frequent responses). The last part of the question asked what changes respondents would like to see to the methods of consultation used. There were a wide variety of useful comments which will inform the draft Statement of Community Involvement. The type of comments which was made most frequently was for some type of early or prior notification before a consultation period begins. Other comments included: better publicity required; too many meetings (meeting fatigue); set a word limit on responses; prefer hard copy (reluctantly use email).

#### Question 5

This three part question asked whether six weeks was sufficient for the respondent (and their organisation) to comment on the Core Strategy and Development Plan Documents and if not, how long would be considered appropriate and why. In both cases a majority indicated that six weeks was sufficient (see table below). 55% of respondents thought that six weeks was long enough to comment on the Core Strategy, 56% of respondents thought that six weeks was long enough to comment on a Development Plan Document.

Core Strategy		
	Yes	No
%	55	46
Development Plan Document		
	Yes	No
%	56	45

Of those who indicated that six weeks was insufficient time, the main reason stated was that many Parish / Town Councils meet every two months. The table below shows the number of respondents who provided an alternative consultation period:

Consultation Period	Number
8 weeks	16
9 weeks	5
10 weeks	13
12 weeks	25
longer	2

### Question 6

This four part question asked for information relating to how respondents would like to be involved in the Development Management process. The first part of the question asked for information about which local publications respondents regularly read. (Appendix 1 shows a full list of publications).

The second part of the question asked which method would be the most useful form of notification that a planning application has been received by the authority. The table below shows the responses:

Method	Site Notice	Letter to adjoining neighbours	Local press notice
Number	39	39	40

Several respondents added additional comments, with 11 respondents commenting that email would be their preferred method of notification.

Next, respondents were asked which method would they prefer to use to comment on a planning application. The table below shows that a significant majority would prefer to be able to submit comments via email (with some adding that they would want to submit emails with attachments).

Method	By email	Via Authority's website	In writing
Number	79	15	30

The last part of this question asked respondents how they would like to be made aware of planning decisions, either by email, via the SDNPAs website or "other". The majority of respondents indicated that email would be their preferred method of notification of planning decisions. The table below shows the results:

Method	By email	via Authority's website	Other
Number	82	14	15

### **Question 7**

The last question was an open question, asking respondents for any other comments that they wished to make. Many comments were from Parish / Town Councils, which included: Officer or member attendance at meetings; Parish Councils should be statutory consultees; Parish Councils should have an automatic right to speak at SDNPA Planning Committee. Other frequent comments were that contacting officers at the South Downs National Park Authority, or it is unclear who should be contacted (particular confusion regarding Link Officer role).

## Appendix 1 – List of Respondents

Alfriston Parish Council  
Amberley Parish Council  
Bedham Commoner's Association  
Bepton Parish Council  
Bignor Parish meeting  
Bishop's Waltham Parish Council  
Braithwaite Partnership Architects  
Bramdean and Hinton Ampner Parish Council  
Bramshott & Liphook Parish Council  
Brighton & Hove City Council  
Brighton & Hove's Wildlife Forum  
Bunton Farmers  
Burpham Village Committee  
Camping and Caravanning Club  
Storrington Downs Residents Association  
Charleston Trust  
Cheriton Parish Council  
Chichester District Council  
Cocking Parish Council  
Common Parish of Sutton & Barlavington  
Community First East Hampshire  
Council of British Archaeology South East  
CPRE (Lewes District)  
CPRE Hampshire (South Downs & Central Group)  
CPRE Sussex  
Denmead Parish Council  
District Association of local Councils  
Duncton Parish Council  
Easebourne Parish Council  
East Chiltington Parish Council  
East Hampshire District Council  
East Sussex County Council  
Eastbourne Borough Council  
Ebernoe Parish Council  
Edward James Foundation  
Environment Agency  
Farringdon Parish Council  
Fernhurst Parish Council  
Findon Parish Council  
Friends of Wolstonbury  
Froxfield parish Council  
Funtington & District Village Hall  
Funtington Parish Council  
Greatham Parish Council  
Hamsey parish Council  
Hawkley Parish Council  
Homes and Communities Agency  
Horndean Parish Council  
Horsham District Council  
Houghton Parish Meeting  
Kings Worthy Parish Council  
Lewes District Council  
Lewes Road for Clean Air / Bike Train  
Lewes Town Council  
Lodsworth Parish Council  
Long Man parish Council  
Marden Parish Meeting  
Mid Sussex District Council  
Milland Parish Council  
Mobile Operators Association  
National Trust  
Natural England  
Newhaven Town Council  
Nordic Walking for Health  
Northchapel Parish Council  
Open Spaces Society  
Parham Parish Council  
Patching Parish Council  
Petersfield Town Council  
Plumpton Parish Council  
Poynings Parish Council  
Pulborough Parish Council  
Ramblers, Sussex Area  
Ringmer Parish Council  
Rodmell Parish Council  
Singleton Parish Council  
Sompting Estate  
South Downs Local Access Forum  
South Downs Society  
Southern Water Services  
Stanmer Preservation Society  
Stopham Estate & Parish  
Storrington & Sullington Parish Council  
Swanmore parish Council  
Telescombe Town Council  
The Coal Authority  
The Folkington Estate  
The Petersfield Society  
The Wiggonholt Association  
Upham Parish Council  
Walberton Parish Council  
Washington Parish Council  
Whitehill Town Council  
Winchester City Council  
Wisborough Green Parish Council  
WP Wyatt & Son  
Individuals

## Appendix 2 – List of Publications

Alton Herald  
Argus  
Bordon Herald  
CDC website  
Chichester Observer  
Council Planning website  
County Times (South Downs Edition)  
Eastbourne Gazette  
Eastbourne Herald  
EHDC Newsletter  
Findon News (Local Newsletter)  
Hampshire Chronicle  
Hampshire Observer  
Haslemere Herald  
Parish Magazine  
Liphook Herald  
Local newspapers (Sutton&Barlavington)  
Local newspapers and public notices (Whitehill)  
Local papers covering the South Downs area  
Mid Sussex times  
Midhurst and Petworth Observer  
Petersfield Herald  
Petersfield post  
SDNP Newspaper  
Site notices  
South East Farmer  
South East Planners news bulletin produced by the RTP1.  
Steyning Herald  
Sussex Express  
Sussex Gazette  
Sussex leader  
Sussex life magazine  
The Messenger  
The News (Portsmouth)  
The Octagon Magazine  
VIVA Lewes  
West Sussex county times  
West Sussex Gazette  
Worthing Herald  
SchNews  
Freebie B&H Leader only.