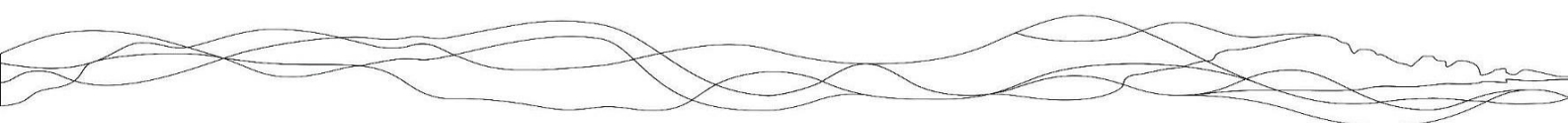




South Downs National Park
Local Development Scheme
(Eleventh Revision)
February 2026



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The Local Development Scheme is also available on the SDNPA website:

www.southdowns.gov.uk

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Local Development Scheme sets out the timetable that the South Downs National Park Authority will follow in the preparation and adoption of planning policy documents.

New South Downs Local Plan

Significant progress on the Local Plan has been made. The first statutory consultation on the new Local Plan and its supporting evidence base took place between January and March 2025. This consultation generated significant interest - over 3,700 comments.

This iteration of the LDS sets out a short delay in the timetable of approximately three months. This is to allow sufficient time to meet the key deadline for submission by the end of December 2026 to ensure the plan will proceed under the current planning system, whilst providing additional time:

- To undertake necessary work to be in the best position possible to achieve a sound plan, and to inform the first round of spatial development strategies;
- For members to absorb and provide a steer on the quite substantial information and potential changes that will be made to the pre-submission plan for Regulation 19 consultation, and to talk to affected parish councils about any proposed changes to proposed allocations; and
- To absorb more from the consultation of the Partnership Management Plan and the final iteration of the Plan for adoption in December 2025.

Remaining Key milestones:

- February – March 2026: Present the Pre-Submission version of the Plan to Planning Committee and a full Authority meeting.
- May – July 2026: The Regulation 19 consultation scheduled to begin in Q1 2026-27.
- 2026 – 2027: Submission for examination during 2026 and adoption during 2027.

Neighbourhood Development Plans

As of July 2025, there were a total of 62 areas designated for the purposes of neighbourhood planning and 45 Neighbourhood Development Plans made part of the statutory development plan. This Local Development Scheme does not set out the timetables for individual Neighbourhood Development Plans and their reviews.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents provide more detailed guidance to explain policies and proposals set out in the Local Plan. The Authority also currently adopts Parish/Village Design Statements as Supplementary Planning Documents for those parts of the National Park that they individually cover. Soberton Parish Council and West Meon Parish Council are currently considering whether to prepare a design statement for their respective areas.

Joint Minerals and Waste Plans

The SDNPA is responsible for planning for the future management of waste and production of minerals within the South Downs National Park. We work in partnership with the mineral and waste planning authorities in Hampshire, West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex Councils on a number of local plans. The timetables for these plans are set out on the County Council's websites.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the timetable that the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) will follow in the preparation and adoption of planning policy documents.
- 1.2** This is the eleventh review of the LDS for the South Downs National Park. It provides a programme for the production of the following Local Plan Documents:
- The new South Downs Local Plan
 - Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP)
 - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)
 - Joint Minerals and Waste Plans
- 1.3** An LDS is required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). Paragraph 003 of the Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph (Reference ID: 61-003-20190315)¹ states that it must specify, among other matters, the documents which, when prepared, will comprise the development plan for the area. It must be made available publicly and kept up-to-date. It is important that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress. Local planning authorities should publish their Local Development Scheme on their website.
- 1.4** There are obviously a number of risks in preparing planning policy documents and a risk register is prepared and updated for the new Local Plan. A significant risk is major changes to national legislation on planning. There is a considerable amount of uncertainty in plan making at the moment. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act received Royal Assent in 2023. This sets out significant changes to plan-making and these requirements are expected to commence once supporting regulations and national policy have been produced by the Government. Alongside this, following the General Election in July 2024, the Labour Government has produced a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and made changes to the way that planning authorities must calculate their housing needs. National Development Management Policies and another revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are currently expected to be published in summer 2025 which could replace or significantly affect some of our thematic policies. There are also a number of rapidly evolving issues that could have a significant impact on plan making particularly nutrient neutrality in the Solent area and water neutrality in the central area of the National Park. We will monitor these matters and address these as necessary through the plan-making process.
- 1.5** We also need to be mindful of pre-election periods commonly known as ‘purdah.’ The SDNPA will not launch public consultations on any of its plans during these periods and this may obviously impact on the LDS set out in this document.

¹ [Plan-making - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

1.6 Progress on the LDS is reported annually in the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)².

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

2.1 The development plan for the South Downs is made up of the adopted South Downs Local Plan which covers the National Park in its entirety, a number of made Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) which cover individual parishes, and several adopted minerals and waste plans prepared for each county in partnership with other local planning authorities. The detailed Local Development Scheme (LDS) for these Plans is set out in Appendix A of this document and the highlights are set out below.

New Local Plan

2.2 The South Downs Local Plan was adopted in July 2019. The Planning Committee of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) agreed to start work on the new Local Plan in May 2022 and a revised timetable was agreed by the Authority in December 2022. It will integrate work undertaken on the Shoreham Cement Works Area Action Plan and take full account of other relevant strategies and plans including the Partnership Management Plan (2020-25) and its review, and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (updated 2024). There are many elements of the award-winning 2019 South Downs Local Plan that remain relevant and fit for the future of the National Park, such as the landscape-led approach seeking to deliver ecosystem services and the dispersed growth strategy. A new Local Plan is being prepared, and, following examination and any required main modifications, will replace in full the South Downs Local Plan adopted in 2019. More details about the scope and process for the production of this new Local Plan can be found in the Project Initiation Document³.

2.3 Significant progress on the Local Plan has been made. The first statutory consultation on the new Local Plan and its supporting evidence base took place between January and March 2025. This consultation generated significant interest with over 3,700 comments received.

2.4 This iteration of the LDS sets out a short delay in the timetable of approximately three months. This is to allow sufficient time to meet the key deadline for submission by the end of December 2026 to ensure the plan will proceed under the current planning system, whilst providing additional time:

- To undertake necessary work for SDNPA to be in the best position possible to achieve a sound plan, and to be as good as possible to inform the first round of spatial development strategies;
- For members to absorb and provide a steer on the quite substantial information and potential changes that will be made to the pre-submission plan for Regulation 19 consultation, and to talk to affected

² [Authority Monitoring Reports - South Downs National Park Authority](#)

³ [Project Initiation Document - South Downs National Park Authority](#)

parish councils about any proposed changes to proposed allocations;
and

- to absorb more from the consultation of the Partnership Management Plan and the final iteration of the Partnership Management Plan which is expected to be adopted in December 2025.

2.5 The timetable sets out that the Pre-Submission version of the new Local Plan will go to Planning Committee and a full Authority meeting in Q4 2025-26 (during February and March 2026). This would be followed by a public consultation in May following elections, and then submission for examination in October/November 2026. The intention is that the LPR will be adopted in 2027.

Neighbourhood Development Plans

2.6 The South Downs Local Plan established the strategic planning policy framework for the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) in the National Park. As of July 2025, there were a total of 62 areas designated for the purposes of neighbourhood planning and 45 NDPs made part of the development plan.

2.7 This LDS does not set out the timetables for individual NDPs and their reviews.

Minerals & Waste Plans

2.8 The SDNPA is responsible for planning for the future management of waste and production of minerals within the South Downs National Park. We are working in partnership with the mineral and waste planning authorities in Hampshire, West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex Councils on a number of local plans. To avoid duplication, we do not report separately on minerals & waste plans in this LDS. The highlights are set out below.

2.9 The SDNPA is currently working in partnership with Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and the New Forest NPA on the examination of a Partial Review of the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan. Full details on the LDS can be found on the Hampshire website⁴.

2.10 For West Sussex and East Sussex, SDNPA is not undertaking any immediate work on minerals & waste plans in these areas, full details on the LDS can be found on their respective websites⁵⁶.

Supplementary Planning Documents

2.11 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide more detailed guidance to explain policies and proposals set out in the Local Plan. A number of SPDs have been prepared and adopted since the adoption of the Local Plan. The SDNPA also currently adopts Parish/Village Design Statements (P/VDS) as SPDs for those parts of the National Park that they individually cover. Soberton Parish Council and West

⁴ [Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://hants.gov.uk)

⁵ [East Sussex waste and minerals monitoring reports | East Sussex County Council](#)

⁶ [Monitoring reports - West Sussex County Council](#)

Meon Parish Council are currently considering whether to prepare a design statement for their respective areas.

APPENDIX A: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

	2024-25				2025-26				2026-27				27-28			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
New Local Plan				18					19		S	E	E	M	A	
East Sussex, Hampshire, and West Sussex Waste and Minerals Plans	<i>Please see ESCC, HCC & WSCC websites for details</i>															
Neighbourhood Development Plans	<i>Please see the Community Planning webpage for details about Neighbourhood Development Plans</i>															
Supplementary Planning Documents	<i>None currently programmed.</i>															

Key to Local Development Scheme

Symbol	Stage in document preparation
S	Submission of documents and information to the Secretary of State
E	Independent examination
M	Consultation on proposed modifications
A	Adoption
13	Representations on a supplementary planning document
18	Representations on the preparation of a local plan
19	Representations on a local plan