



SOUTH DOWNS NEWS

WORK AND PLAY IN YOUR NATIONAL PARK

This month:

- Hear how **farmers are finding new ways to tell their stories** out on the hills
- Tell us **what makes our coastline special** to you
- **Win a wine tasting tour at Upperton Vinyard** (plus a bottle to take home!)
- Why the **SDNPA is calling for a judicial review on proposal for A27** at Arundel
- Getting ideas for some **great South Downs cycling**

As always please send your comments and ideas to us at newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk

CALL FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW ON PROPOSAL FOR A27 AT ARUNDEL

Our Chair, Margaret Paren, explains why the SDNPA is calling for a judicial review on Highways England's preferred route.

"Making difficult decisions is never easy. On issues that really impact a community, facts and opinion become mingled and emotions run high. With full awareness of the complexity of the issue, on 24 May the South Downs National Park Authority met to consider the announcement by Highways England of its preferred route, 5a, for the Arundel Bypass. Having heard from public speakers, considered expert legal opinion and discussing in detail, the difficult decision was taken to commence proceedings for a judicial review.



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"As I said at the time, this decision was not taken lightly. However, it is incumbent on the National Park Authority to consider how we should achieve our statutory purposes.

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

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“It is these statutory purposes, set by Government in legislation, that must govern our work and inform all of our decisions. It is these statutory purposes that provided a compelling case for us to commence proceedings when we believe, on the evidence available to us, that Highways England have not followed the correct procedure, which was to set out, to the same level of detail, for all options both inside and outside the National Park. In our view this led to them discounting options outside of the National Park too early in the process. Moreover, they have not provided any detail on mitigation and compensation for damage done to the National Park.

“It is not too late for Highways England to get it right and find a solution that delivers benefit to the people of Arundel without damaging the cherished South Downs National Park.”

Paragraph 5.151 of the National Policy Statement on National Networks states that planning permission should be refused for major developments in National Parks except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of these applications should include an assessment of the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the National Park; and opportunities to moderate any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities.



DISCOVER FARMERS' STORIES IN THE SOUTH DOWNS THIS SUMMER

Visitors to the South Downs National Park will get a unique insight into the lives of six local farmers this summer thanks to an innovative trail of 'watching & listening posts' linked to short films about their work. The films will be previewed at Lee Farm Open Day on Sunday 24 June.

Twelve posts will be placed on public rights of way between the Arun and Adur rivers. Simply holding a phone (with NFC function switched on) over a picture on the post will reveal the film introducing the person responsible for caring for and working on that stretch of land.

The films, supported by the South Downs National Park Authority, are the brainchild of 24 local farmers working together as the Arun to Adur Farm Cluster. Nature doesn't recognise farm boundaries so together the farmers are supporting endangered birds such as the lapwing, grey partridge and skylark. The area is also a focus for bringing the very rare Duke of Burgundy butterfly back from the brink of extinction.

Dominic Gardner, who farms at Lee Farm in Angmering, said:

“We want to introduce ourselves to the people who enjoy spending time here and end the perception that farmers are old-fashioned or unapproachable. I grew up in a town, am up for a chat if you're passing and use technology such as GPS to support precision farming on land that's been owned by the same family for generations.

“Being a farmer makes you very aware that we're only here for a short time but what we do can have a massive impact. I want to run a business producing great, healthy food and helping wildlife to thrive but we can only do this if people support us.”

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Bruce Fowkes, Farming Officer for the South Downs National Park Authority, said:

“More than ever we need people to appreciate the value of the work farmers do in the National Park. The mosaic of fields and hedgerows you see in the South Downs' landscapes draw in millions of people every year – but how many think about the work that goes into caring for them and the wildlife that lives here.

“It's great to see our farmers working together and coming up with innovative ideas to tell the story of their work.”

Lee Farm Open Sunday is a day for young and old, to meet farmers and discover the work they do producing our food, enhancing the countryside and all the goods and services farmers provide.

www.southdowns.gov.uk/event/open-farm-sunday-arun-to-adur-farm-cluster/



LOCAL PLAN SUBMITTED

After four years, nine town and parish workshops, four public roadshows, and three public consultations generating more than 10,000 separate comments, the first Local Plan to cover the entire South Downs National Park has been submitted to the Government. The plan sets out planning policies across the whole of the National Park, how land is used and what can be built where.

Local plans have the power to make a big difference to the world around you. This is particularly the case for the South Downs where development needs to be properly managed in order to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage for which the National Park was designated seven years ago.

“The South Downs Local Plan puts our nationally important landscapes first and will ensure they sit at the heart of every planning decision we make,” says Margaret Paren, Chair of the National Park Authority. “Putting the landscape first means making sure we get the right growth in the right places. This will both protect our landscapes and allow our communities to flourish, providing better places to live and work for the 112,000 people who call the South Downs National Park home.”

In developing the plan we have also set out the high standards that all proposed development must meet to protect and value nature – both for its own sake and also for the vital ‘eco-system’ services it gives us such as clean water, food, wood and space to breathe.

During the past seven years our planners – both within the National Park Authority and working under delegated authority in other local authorities – have been using more than a thousand policies from the 12 local planning authorities responsible for managing

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development before 2011. The draft Local Plan will replace these with just 96 policies, consistent across the whole National Park from the edge of Eastbourne to Winchester.

We’ve now received confirmation that an Inspector has been appointed. He’ll set questions to be answered by the Authority and other interested parties on the plan. All outstanding queries will be dealt with at public hearings, expected to be held at the South Downs Centre in Midhurst. The date will be confirmed by the Inspector in due course.

As well as the Local Plan itself we’ve submitted all of the evidence used in its preparation and more than 2,500 comments received in the final pre-submission consultation held in autumn 2017.

This is available to view at

www.southdowns.gov.uk/localplan

All updates on the Local Plan will be published on the examination website including times and dates for public hearings.



WHAT MAKES OUR COASTLINE SPECIAL?

At the eastern end of the National Park the South Downs tumble to the sea in an iconic stretch of chalk cliff and river mouth. This dramatic landscape – which takes in Seaford Head, Cuckmere Haven, Seven Sisters and Beachy Head – is officially called the Sussex Heritage Coast and we need your help to tell its story.

The Sussex Heritage Coast was defined in 1973, the first of 32 established around England to conserve the country’s best stretches of undeveloped coasts. It includes two nationally important areas for wildlife and natural heritage; rare habitats such as herb-rich chalk grassland and chalk heath; and species like the

peregrine falcon, rock sea lavender, sea radish, blue mussel and the short snouted seahorse.

The South Downs National Park Authority is one of 11 organisations who look after this coastline and together we've formed the Sussex Heritage Coast Partnership. We want to make sure that this amazing place can be conserved and enjoyed for generations to come – and we need your help to develop the story of this area.

Tell us what makes the Sussex Heritage Coast special to you by completing our short online questionnaire at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/sussexcoast

The Sussex Heritage Coast Partnership is made up of: South Downs National Park Authority, Eastbourne Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, National Trust, Seaford Town Council, Environment Agency, Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Lewes District Council, Natural England, Sussex Wildlife Trust and Wealden District Council.



YOUR SUMMER OF SOUTH DOWNS CYCLING STARTS HERE

From new or nervous riders to mountain bikers, the South Downs has something to offer most cyclists. Alister Linton-Crook, South Downs Cycling Officer, shares some ideas.

Where to get started

If you're new to cycling or haven't ridden for a while you'll be looking for a wide, flat surface well away from traffic where you can build up your confidence. There

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are a number of trails following old railway lines across the National Park which fit your needs, open to cyclists, walkers and horse riders, many of which start and end at current railway stations. Try the Downs Link from Shoreham, Centurion Way which starts in Chichester, the Meon Valley Trail and the route linking Petersfield to Queen Elizabeth Country Park, both in Hampshire.

Join the South Downs National Park Family ride on Sunday 10 June in Winchester around the closed city streets that form the Criterium race circuit which follows afterwards. Online booking has now closed but there will be spaces available to sign up on the day. Find us in Abbey Gardens from 8.30am for a 10.45 start.

Look out for some 'Cycle the Downs' guided rides during the summer from Peacehaven, Newhaven and Seaford as part of the East Sussex Active Access for Growth Programme. They will be ideal for beginners and returning cyclists wanting to experience some gentle, social rides and learn about landscapes and heritage of the National Park

www.southdowns.gov.uk/enjoy/cycling/

Ready to find some company?

If you're feeling ready to explore further, but would like a bit of support or company, it's time to join a group ride or perhaps a sportive.

Cycling UK have a list of organised rides and cycle events running until 28 July as part of their Big Bike Revival www.cyclinguk.org/bigbikerevival

Most cycling clubs are accredited to Cycling UK or British Cycling and have regular organised rides catering for cyclists of all levels. Find your local club at www.cyclinguk.org/go-cycling and www.letsride.co.uk/social

You may wish to enjoy one of the many cycle sportives or mountain bike events in the National Park which are hosted by a range of organisations including charity rides, cycling clubs and commercial bodies. More information is available here

<http://www.sportive.com/sportive-calendar>
www.timeoutdoors.com/Bestmountainbiking

Seeking more adrenaline? You can find dedicated bike parks with graded trails at Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Rogate Downhill, Stoughton Forest, Steyning MTB and Friston Forest.

You can also find and download plenty of off-road routes in the South Downs on the View Ranger app <http://my.viewranger.com/route/curations/574>

Where to watch cycle racing

On Sunday 10 June the streets of Winchester will close for a day devoted to cycling at the Criterium, a 1km

circuit race around the city.

www.winchestercriterium.org/

We'll be based in Abbey Gardens with pond dipping, fun and games, face-painting and crafts to get our younger riders in the spirit of thing so please come and ask us any questions about exploring the National Park – by bike or other means.

Other cycling to watch this summer include the Men's Tour of Sussex stage race from 5 to 8 July www.tourofsussex.com/news which takes in a time trial up Ditchling Beacon, Goodwood and Beachy Head. The Women's Tour of Sussex stage race is from 6 to 9 September including a Bo Peep time trial and Beachy Head.

On 23 September the first 100-mile VeloSouth closed-road cycle event will come through the National Park. Individual places sold out almost immediately but there are still charity places available. Evidence from similar races shows that these events can be a huge boost for the local economy with cyclists and their families not only spending in local shops and accommodation on the day but returning at other times of year – so get out and cheer those riders on! www.velosouth.com



CAUTION AND COMMON SENSE URGED WHEN VISITING THE SUSSEX CLIFFS

Look out for a poster campaign reminding everyone to stay safe while visiting the famous white chalk Sussex cliffs this summer. From the end of May warning posters have been displayed on bus routes, at visitor car parks, in tourist information centres, on community notice boards and sent to local language schools.

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The summer months always see a significant increase in visitor numbers to this coastline – which stretches from the edge of Eastbourne, past Beachy Head, the Seven Sisters and Seaford Head – eager to see and photograph the famous white cliffs and enjoy the fabulous coastal paths. At many locations there are overhangs or faults in the cliffs that cannot be seen from the cliff tops.

“Sea cliffs are constantly changing, and the soft chalk rock here breaks easily,” says Matt Pavitt of HM Coastguard. “Cliff falls can occur at any time and can be significant, such as the 50,000 tonnes of rock which fell onto the beach at Seaford Head last summer.

“We’re reminding everyone to stay safe. Warning signs are there for a reason. Keep away from the cliff edge and the base of cliffs when on the beach. Don’t risk going to the edge to take a selfie – no photograph is worth risking your life for.”

“If you see anyone in danger, or witness someone who has fallen, call 999 immediately and ask for the Coastguard. Do not attempt to rescue them.”

If you have a business in the area please get involved by displaying a poster in your windows. We’ll also be sharing safety messages through our social media using the hashtag #BeCliffAware

This is a joint campaign being promoted by HM Coastguard, The National Trust, South Downs National Park Authority, Sussex Wildlife Trust, East Sussex County Council, Seaford Town Council, Wealden District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council and Lewes District Council and to raise awareness of the potential dangers of the chalk cliffs to residents and visitors. Together we are also carrying out a review of warning signs across the area and updating these where needed.

“Don’t risk going to the edge to take a selfie – no photograph is worth risking your life for.”

Download campaign posters from www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/BeCliffAware or email bsp@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk to request one to display in the window of your business email

For more information on how to have a safe day out at the coast visit coastguardsafety.campaign.gov.uk/

WIN A WINE TASTING TOUR OF UPPERTON AND A BOTTLE OF WINE

The South Downs is lucky enough to be home to many thriving vineyards, producing some of England's finest sparkling wines. As we move into warmer weather, what better way to sample them than at an award-winning vineyard nestled in the heart of the National Park?

The lovely people at Upperton Vineyards are kindly offering our readers the chance to win a wine tasting tour for two people, and a bottle of delicious Upperton wine. The tour is suitable for any level of understanding and is set against the backdrop of the beautiful rolling South Downs. Anyone who signs up as a new member of this newsletter during June will automatically be entered but to make sure our existing readers don't miss out you can also enter by emailing us at the address below before 30 June 2018.

To enter the draw email us with the subject 'Wine tasting tour' to newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk

Terms and conditions apply, please read them here www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/South-Downs-News-sign-up-Upperton-tour-Terms-Conditions.pdf



FIVE THINGS TO DO IN THE SOUTH DOWNS THIS MONTH

Find these & more events across the National Park and submit your own events at southdowns.gov.uk/events/



- **Watch a lumberjack display** at West's Wood Fair
- **Cycle through Winchester, traffic-free**, on the Family Cycle ride, part of the Winchester Criterium
- **Celebrate Sussex Day** with a walk from Tillington to Midhurst
- **Visit a working farm** and take a tractor & trailer ride at Lee Farm in Angmering
- **Join a snake hunt** to spot adders with RSPB Pulborough Brooks

ON THE GROUND

From meeting with farmers, offering training and support to local communities, leading walks, organising and training volunteers, controlling invasive species and supporting key species, South Downs National Park Rangers are out in the National Park every weekday and many weekends over the year.

Don't forget to say hello if you spot them out working. Here's a taste of what they achieved in May 2018:

- Joined three Country Trust days as part of our continuing partnership with the Hampshire-based charity which brings **children unlikely to experience the countryside onto farms** to teach them more about nature and food production.
- Trained eight new volunteers on **water vole field sign survey techniques** so that we can continue to monitor released populations along the River Meon and cut back invasive species at three keys sites along the River Meon to improve plant diversity alongside the river bank for recently released water voles.
- Began **butterfly surveys on three sites** to monitor continued winter scrub clearance with farmers from the Winchester Downs Farm Cluster. Results will feed directly to Butterfly Conservation's data. Assisted with **pearl-bordered fritillary releases in West Sussex woodland** with Butterfly Conservation
- Our **spring/summer events season continued** with: a successful first time stand at the Portsmouth Lord Mayor's Rural and Seaside show; first time attendance at the Big Church Day out at Wiston; and the Gilbert White Nature Day at Selborne.
- **Helped people face up to their fear of cows** at the Heathlands Reunited 'Meet the Cattle' event at Liss Forest
- Began the first of two yearly cut backs to **improve access on the South Downs Way**.
- Gave **presentations to both Sheet Parish Council and Langrish Parish Council** AGMs on project work in the area
- **Installed four kissing gates** on access land
- **Replaced three fingerposts** on the South Downs Way
- Cleared vegetation around newly planted hedgerow at Steyning Downland Scheme and relocated a water trough nearby to **protect an adder habitat**



- Carried out improvements to furniture at Graffham Down to improve access for users with restricted mobility and **found four dormice during dormouse monitoring on the site**
- Continued **lapwing surveys at South Stoke and Offham** for the Arun to Adur Farmer Cluster Group
- Started **bracken scything** at a number of heathland sites
- Finished **replanting around South Pond** in Midhurst
- Carried out orchid surveys in partnership with Natural England, **looking at early spider orchid populations at Castle Hill**
- Agreed **plans for wildflower planting** at Newhaven
- Took **pupils from Lewes Priory School out for a day** clearing a stretch of the South Downs Way
- **Carried out flint walling** with 80 person days spent reconstructing 10-square metres of an important estate boundary wall, originally built by prisoners of the Napoleonic War
- Working with police, local community and East Sussex County Council to **tackle off-roading issue and damage to SSSI in Offham**
- Walked and **surveyed a section of the coastal path**
- Continued **work to enhance the chalk grassland at Mill Hill Local Nature Reserve** – Butterfly Conservation have recorded large numbers of Adonis blue on the site this year
- Carried out **meadow management at Pheasants Field near Hassocks**
- **Cut regrowth** at Halcombe Farm Local Wildlife Site near Piddinghow and Anchor Bottom Site of Special Scientific Interest
- **Controlled invasive Himalayan balsam** at Ditchling

MOST ASKED...

Answers to questions about a particular area of work in the National Park – some sent in by you and others that we get asked all the time.

Answering this month are: Tania Hunt and Diana Adamson, SDNPA support service officers.



I RUN A LOCAL INFORMATION BOOTH. ARE YOU HAPPY FOR US TO TAKE LEAFLETS FROM YOUR FRONT DESK AREA TO RE-STOCK OUR SHELVES?

All of our leaflets are available from Brochure Connect who supply them free of charge. You'll need to register with them so that you can then order them online.

www.brochureconnect.co.uk/logon.php

WHAT TIME DO THE GATES OPEN TO THE PARK?

This question comes in all the time from international visitors. We let them know that there aren't gates, the South Downs National Park covers an area of 1,627km² and stretches for 100 miles from Winchester in the west to Eastbourne in the east through the counties of Hampshire, West Sussex and East Sussex.

We'll ask what they're hoping to see and what sort of landscape interests them so we can guide them to the best places to visit.

HOW DO I GET HOLD OF A PLANNING OFFICER? THERE'S A PIECE OF LAND

FOR AUCTION AND I WANT TO KNOW IF I NEED PLANNING PERMISSION BEFORE I BUY IT?

Unfortunately we do not have a duty officer here on site, so we ask people to put all enquiries in writing. There are so many variables in planning within a National Park so the team need to look at each case individually and come back with an assessment in writing. We'll direct people to the 'do I need planning permission' form on our website.

www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/do-i-need-planning-permission/

I WOULD LIKE TO SCATTER ASHES IN A SPECIFIC PLACE WITHIN THE PARK, IS THIS POSSIBLE?

Permission to scatter ashes must be given by the landowner and the SDNPA doesn't own any land. Because of data protection we can't supply details of owners of privately-owned land, but these can be obtained directly from the Land Registry website, on payment of a fee (currently £3). See their website www.gov.uk/search-property-information-land-registry

YOU SAY:

Do you have a story you want to tell about the National Park? A burning issue that you think needs to be addressed? Please let us know.

To submit a comment for our newsletter please email newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk. For a fast and direct response to your questions please email info@southdowns.gov.uk

Please note that only contributors who submit their full name and address can be considered for publication though we will not publish your full address. Please make it clear whether you are speaking on your own behalf or that of an organisation you represent. We reserve the right to shorten comments and edit where necessary.



LAST CALL FOR LEADER FUNDING

A final call for funding applications to the Fieldfare LEADER programme is now being made. Applicants have until the end of August to submit their application or expression of interest. LEADER can fund rural projects which contribute to the local economy, and can be for anything between £2,500 and £100,000. The grant funding is typically 40% of the total project cost.

More information and an initial interest form are available at fieldfareuk.org/

SIGN UP TO OUR NEWSLETTER

Sign up for this monthly newsletter. With the latest South Downs news, stories, ideas for days out, competitions, to hear about our ranger and volunteers' work and much more...

www.southdowns.gov.uk/join-the-newsletter/



ALL ABOUT OUR TREES

What happened when our own Nick Heasman took tree bloggers from The Long View out to meet notable South Downs trees – photo by Rob Fraser.

Make yourself a cup of tea and settle in for a good long read thelongview.today/2018/06/04/trees-south-downs-national-park/



ART APPRECIATION

Assistant Ranger Charlotte was passing through East Meon when she spotted the Rowlands Castle painting society on the stretch that our western rangers and volunteers have been working on in recent years.

Thank you to Roger Matthews for letting us share this photo of his work of their work.