



SOUTH DOWNS NEWS

WORK AND PLAY IN YOUR NATIONAL PARK

This month:

- **Who won our 2018-19 photo competition?** The judges' decision revealed
- **Who do you think should have won our 2018-19 photo competition?** Vote for people's choice
- Get fit, be outdoors, try something new... **10 things you could get out of volunteering in 2019**
- Our response to the **Government's first review on protected landscapes in 70 years**

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

Ethereal dawn wins South Downs photo competition

Early morning light casts shadows across an ethereal autumn mist, witnessed only by rolling hills and one small bird in Lorraine Heaysman's winning image in the South Downs National Park photo competition 2018-19. Lorraine from Worthing in West Sussex, wins £250, for her picture 'Autumn gold' – taken from the hills above Upwaltham.

"Lorraine's photo has such emotional impact and really showcases the South Downs National Park as a world class destination," says competition judge Steve Watkins, editor of Outdoor Photography Magazine.

"The competition was phenomenally tough this year but Lorraine's ethereal photo, which completely fits this year's theme 'Perfectly Seasoned', is a well-deserved winner."



1st place: 'Autumn gold' by Lorraine Heaysman

Speaking about her win Lorraine said: "Mornings have always been my favourite time of the day and I spend so much time searching for these conditions – mist can be fickle! I am bowled over that the judges liked my image enough for it to win. Moments like these on a hill top are filled with beauty, peace and tranquillity and my heart skips a beat whenever I walk along the downs and see scenes like this."

Second prize goes to Dominic Vacher for his picture 'Race against time' taken from Tegdown Hill north of Brighton during last summer's heatwave. The last light hits the dust of a farmer racing to bring his harvest home as the evening shadows lengthen. Dominic, from Brighton, wins £150.



2nd place: 'Race against time' by Dominic Vacher

"I love the pace, lines and colours of Dominic's photo," says competition judge Finn Hopson, local photographer and owner of Brighton Photography Gallery. "This is the life of a farmer, out working in the National Park in 2018 and yet it captures the feeling of those old war time photos designed to remind people of what a special place the South Downs is."

Dominic Vacher said of his photograph: "There had been a long hot and dry spell for weeks but the forecast predicted a dramatic change with stormy weather imminent. The farmer was clearly taking heed and working frantically to get his crops harvested before the weather turned. I returned the next day hoping to find a classic scene with the field scattered with bales but alas, the farmer had come back early and scooped them up and off to storage, away from the heavy rain."



3rd place: 'Freshly frozen' by Clive Blott

Third prize has been won by Clive Blott for his show-stopping portrait of a cow taken on a very cold January morning near Midhurst. Clive, from Easebourne, has won £50 for his photo 'Freshly frozen'.

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"The textures in Clive's photo are wonderful," says award-winning photographer and competition judge Rachael Talibart. "He has made this cow, with its frozen eyelashes, ears hung with icicles and snow-covered nose, look heroic – like a polar explorer."

Clive Blott said of his photograph: "I was walking our dog in the snow and found these cows sheltering under the trees. There had been a lot of snow that week – great fun for those, like me, that didn't have to travel to work and the perfect opportunity for me to walk everywhere with my camera close at hand. Photography has been a hobby of mine for many years and this will definitely encourage me to enter more competitions in the future."

Vote for your favourite!

The three winning images together with three highly commended images will now go forward for will join three highly commended photos to go forward for the people's choice vote with a prize of £100. These are 'Amongst the beech trees' by Jonathan Peacock, 'Winter on Butser' by Ron De'Ath, and 'Coastguard Cottages at sunrise' by Zoltan Kecskes.



Highly commended: 'Winter on Butser' by Ron De'Ath



Highly commended: 'Coastguard Cottages at sunrise' by Zoltan Attila



Highly commended: 'Amongst the beech trees' by Jonathan Peacock

Who deserves to win our £100 people's choice prize?
Vote for your favourite at
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SouthDownsPhoto2018-19>



SDNPA responds to Glover Review on protected landscapes

In spring 2018 the Government launched a review of England's protected landscapes, nearly 70 years on from the creation of our country's first National Parks.

The review, led by Julian Glover, is a 'once in a generation' chance to look at how these precious landscapes, our National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), are doing, how they can be better protected and what can be done so that everyone benefits from them.

In our response we consider the huge pressures that the South Downs faces as Britain's newest National Park, situated in the busiest part of the country. Our

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precious woods and chalk downs, heaths and mixed farms are all privately owned and, outside planning, the SDNPA has no special powers or funds either to support good wildlife management and access or help rural communities and businesses. We have made more than 50 proposals and our key messages include:

- The Partnership Management Plan for the National Park needs to have more weight with all the public bodies who operate within the boundaries, with a stronger duty put on them so that public money is always used in ways that enhance, rather than damage, what makes the South Downs special;
- The SDNPA should be able to design and run the new scheme for supporting farmers to look after wildlife, access and heritage in the National Park once we leave the EU, and to create a nature recovery network across the South Downs and beyond its boundaries linking with our neighbour AONBs;
- We should be able to work with County Councils, the NHS and Public Health England to make the South Downs much more accessible to a wider group of people, especially those who are not able to access it at the moment, who would benefit most from better health and who live just on the boundary.

Julian Glover has been asked to make his final recommendations to Government by the Autumn of 2019 in time for the 70th anniversary of Britain's first National Parks. But first he and his support team at Defra have the mammoth task of reviewing more than a thousand responses to their call for evidence.

Read the South Downs National Park Authority's (SDNPA) response to the Julian Glover review of National Parks and AONBs in full
www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Glover-Review-SDNPA-response-FINAL-for-website.pdf



National Park communities benefit from £250,000 S106 funding

The acquisition of an old library to be used at a community facility and town council offices, improvements to paths and the purchase of new play equipment were among 35 projects in the South Downs National Park awarded a total of £255,828.78 through S106 contributions in 2018.

An S106 is a legal agreement used to mitigate the impact of new homes on the local community. In the South Downs National Park the grants are awarded by the National Park Authority who work with Parish and Town Councils and as other stakeholders within communities as they develop projects.

Projects funded in 2018 included:

- £171,546 on improving community facilities including the acquisition of the Old Library in Midhurst.
- £30,684 for improvement works to paths.
- £31,406 for play area improvement works and replacement equipment.
- £14,035 on traffic calming measures

See the full list of all the projects funded, by town/parish at

www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-communities-benefit-250000-section-106-funding/



Ten things I get out of volunteering and you could too

Do you have any resolutions to spend more of this year outdoors, getting fit, meeting new people, or giving something back to a place you love?

Kirsty Ferris has been volunteering regularly for the National Park since February 2017 and last autumn took on a new role as one of our two Youth Ambassadors so we asked her for some top tips why she thinks you should consider giving your time to a National Park in 2019.

1. Learning new skills

How to use a scythe, putting up fences and surveying for dormice are just some of the vast number of new skills I've learned since I started volunteering for the South Downs National Park. I'm also learning communication skills and putting them into practice – for example, in this article!

2. Developing more confidence

When I first started volunteering, I was scared to even join in conversations with other members of my team. Two years later I've gone to a conference and spoken to people from all over Europe.

3. Fun

Many tasks involve cutting things down and burning them which I personally find really fun. I look forward to volunteer days as I come home every time feeling exhausted but happy.

4. Helping the environment

In a time when the environment is becoming more damaged every day, carrying out work that directly helps it is immensely rewarding and gives me such a sense of pride.

5. Better mental health

Spending time in nature has helped me to deal with anxiety and depression. Having time to breathe in fresh air and knowing that I'm making a difference has benefitted my mental health. During stressful exam periods volunteering has given me the chance to relax and think about something else.

6. Gaining invaluable work experience

Through my volunteering I've gained more than just practical experience. I have learnt about working with landowners and stakeholders, learnt about site designations and about working within a team and with multiple organisations. Volunteering has meant that when I leave university I will be in the best position to start my career within conservation.

7. Feeling more connected to nature and the community

Seeing butterflies skip around a previously overgrown area after you've spent hours scything or enjoying the wildflowers after clearing an invasive species is incredibly rewarding and makes you feel like you've helped nature return to the way it should be.

Whilst we're working members of the public often walk past and ask us about what we're doing and thank us, so it feels like we're also helping people that live in and enjoy the area.

8. Meeting new people from different backgrounds

The South Downs Volunteer Ranger Service is open to everybody and through volunteering I have met people from lots of different backgrounds and become friends with people who I would never have spoken to otherwise.

9. The joy of giving something back

From a young age I've spent many hours exploring the South Downs, from walking the South Downs Way to camping under the stars. Volunteering has meant that I can give something back to an area that has given me so many happy memories. The work I do with the Volunteer Ranger Service helps to keep the National Park the amazing place it is.

10. Feeling like a valued team member

Working within a team to complete a task every week has meant that I feel like a real team member. Each member is valued and everyone takes an interest in your life outside of volunteering. If someone misses a session we feel their absence throughout the team.

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Find out more about opportunities to volunteer in the South Downs National Park at www.southdowns.gov.uk/care-for/volunteering/

Five things to do in the South Downs this November

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



- **Learn to drive a wetland boat** at Arundel Wetland Centre
- **See Antarctic treasures** from the Oates collection at Gilbert White's House
- Get up early to **beat the early birds** at Arundel Wetland Centre
- **Beat the January blues with a heathland health walk** on Iping Common
- **Print your own wildlife-themed tote bag** and wrapping paper at RSPB Pulborough Brooks



Invitation to maunder

How do you draw the sound of jackdaws encountered on a walk? Or portray the direction and strength of wind using a wind vane? Or give a sense of shifting ground as you walk across a hillside? The new 'Maunder Maps' exhibition at Ditchling Museum for Arts and Crafts, supported by the South Downs National Park Authority, aims to do just that.

Words by Andy Beattie, Countryside & Policy Manager for the South Downs National Park Authority.

Artist Jane Pitt created the 'Maunder Maps' exhibition following workshops encouraging people to explore the National Park and area around the village. To someone who understands a conventional 1:25,000 ordnance survey map, the different coloured lines clearly show the topography and shape of the landscape. Jane's work incorporates these references and yet builds on them a representation of the feelings of the person on the walk at that time. It's a thought provoking and interesting way to consider and represent the countryside.

Jane Pitt is an inter-disciplinary artist and she invites all of your senses to join in. Visitors record their feelings and observations as they wander thoughtfully, to 'maunder' is an old Sussex term, along the footpaths and lanes of Ditchling and the South Downs. There is also a display of old Sussex dialogue and while words such as 'bostal', a steep track up the north side of the downs, are still very much in use today, others like 'smeuse', a gap or hole made by the regular use of animals, and 'haitchy', misty, are little-used relics from the past.

Jane's 'Maunder Map' and 'Old Sussex Dialect' exhibition, both on display at the museum until 28 April 2019, inspire us to reflect on and appreciate the experience of walking in the National Park in a way

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that, at best, we do subconsciously if at all. Take the opportunity to visit, then go away and be inspired to create your own maunder map of a place you love. You may find that you begin to see and experience it in an entirely new way.

'Maunder Maps' accompanies the 'Wunderground Maps' exhibition by Max Gill also at the Ditchling Museum for Arts and Crafts.

www.ditchlingmuseumartcraft.org.uk/event/maunder-maps/



Save the date to get moonstruck

South Downs Dark Skies Festival – 15 February to 3 March 2019

The South Downs Dark Skies Festival returns from Friday 15 February to Sunday 3 March 2019 with events across the National Park. With 2019 marking 50 years since the Apollo 11 moon landing this year's event, which celebrates the National Park's International Dark Sky Reserve status, will have a distinctly lunar theme.

There will be talks, activities and star parties taking place across the length and breadth of the South Downs during the festival.

The festival's flagship event, Stargazing South Downs, will return to Midhurst on Saturday 16 February and, for first time, also come to Petersfield on Monday 18 February, and Lewes on Wednesday 20 February during the school half-term. Look out for outdoor star- and moon-gazing (fingers crossed for a clear night) as well as indoor talks and activities where you can meet some of the wildlife that loves the night, discover why the moon is so important, dress up as an astronaut to stage your very own moon landing, or learn the secrets of taking stunning night photography.

"The star-studded skies above our heads are as valuable as our beautiful rolling landscapes and we can't wait to share them with even more people," says 'Dark-Skies' Dan Oakley, Lead Ranger at the South Downs National Park.

"The South Downs Dark Skies Festival is our chance to show-off our night skies, share tips on how to enjoy them and explain why they are worth protecting"

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With the full moon falling during the festival we're looking forward to telling the story of our nearest neighbour and the influence it has on plants, animals and us. Embrace the darkness and get moonstruck!"

Find your nearest events on the South Downs Dark Skies festival website

www.southdowns.gov.uk/enjoy/events/dark-skies-festival/

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.

Colin Keppel from Droxford says:

On the recently resurfaced old Meon valley railway line near Droxford station, I was surprised to see on a wooden signpost "West Meon 5 miles" and "Wickham 5 miles"! Miles?? Schoolchildren don't learn "miles" these days. You will confuse them. It's not a public road where imperial units are still strangely mandatory. Please show the Department of Transport the right way to go and use SI units on your signs. What would General de Gaulle have thought if he had seen your sign when he passed that way in 1944? We have had enough of the British being the only ones marching out of step, haven't we?

Allison Thorpe, SDNPA Access & Recreation Lead, says

This is something that we've given some thought to. I'm afraid that the national standard for giving distances on footpaths is the same as that for roads in the UK.

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.



The only right of way that we actually manage in the National Park is the South Downs Way. All other rights of way remain with the Local Access Authorities (Hampshire County Council, East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council) – so the only finger-posts that we maintain are on the South Downs Way.

Wherever possible we will try to include distances in both miles and kilometres, for example on our walking leaflets. However where space is short, we do have to default to miles.

Incidentally, the Department for Transport has considered converting road distances on various occasions over the years – concluding each time that it is preferable to stick with miles.

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