

January 2018

SOUTH DOWNS PLANNING

NEWS FROM YOUR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY



Welcome to the planning newsletter for the South Downs National Park Authority
Send your comments to us at planning@southdowns.gov.uk

LEWES DEPOT WINS PRESTIGIOUS PLANNING AWARD

Work done by the South Downs National Park Authority and Burrell Foley Fischer Architects to restore an old brewery site into a cinema and community arts venue has been recognised with a top regional planning award.

The Depot Cinema in Lewes was crowned overall winner at the RTPI South East Awards for Planning Excellence, and also picked up an award as winner in the category for Excellence in Planning for Heritage.

The project retained the original building on site (a familiar landmark adjacent to Lewes railway station) whilst sensitively extending it to provide modern facilities. As well as providing three cinema screens the



building accommodates theatre space, temporary exhibitions, educational facilities, a restaurant and a bar.

The teams now have their sights fixed firmly on the National Awards!

Read more about the project

www.southdowns.gov.uk/lewes-gets-a-cinema/



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING CONSULTANCY SERVICE

Over the past 7 years we've supported more than 50 Neighbourhood Planning Groups across the South Downs and gained a wealth of experience. Now we're sharing these skills beyond the National Park's borders

"The support provided by SDNPA to the East Meon Neighbourhood Plan was crucial in our success. They gave clear insight into the process and incisive advice on how to address some of our more difficult decisions, while supporting the objectives of our NDP."

"At no time did we feel pressured into accepting the default planning policies. Their support in managing the examiners comments enabled East Meon to retain its character and meet the objectives of our plan."

George Thompson East Meon Neighbourhood Plan steering group

Over the past 7 years our small team of planners and community development specialists have supported more than 50 Neighbourhood Planning Groups as well as Village Design Statements, Parish Plans and Local Landscape Character Assessments across the National Park. Along the way they've gained a wealth of experience at taking planning out into our communities.

Now we want to share these skills beyond our borders with a new consultancy service offering neighbourhood and community planning support. Our plan is to offer a bespoke service helping parish councils and local authorities to deliver plans that are sensitive to landscape and village or town character and firmly guided by the needs and aspirations of the community – in particular, in rural communities in

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other National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

For the South Downs National Park Authority, the service will provide an income stream supporting work back here in the South Downs.

"The support provided by SDNPA to the East Meon Neighbourhood Plan was crucial in our success. They gave clear insight into the process and incisive advice on how to address some of our more difficult decisions."

Find out more at

www.southdowns.gov.uk/npconsultancy



DARK NIGHT SKIES

In 2016 the South Downs National Park became an International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR). With properly dark skies in the South East of England under threat, this is a statement that our skies are worth protecting. The South Downs Local Plan sets out to do just that.

This February we'll be celebrating our International Dark Sky Reserve status with our second South Downs Dark Skies Festival. We think our star-studded skies overhead are as valuable as our beautiful rolling landscapes so we're taking steps to protect and enhance them through the Local Plan.

Local Plan Policy SD8: Dark Night Skies sets out a hierarchy for new development. Wherever possible new development will be required to avoid installing lighting. If new lighting is unavoidable steps must be taken to avoid its impacts on our dark night skies by making sure that it's properly designed, taking into consideration direction of lighting and number of lumens emitted. If that is not possible, adverse impacts of lighting will be required to be mitigated – for example, by installing timing restrictions and making

sure that the light emitted is of a colour that won't disturb wildlife.

There is also a spatial element to the policy, with different criteria being applied in different areas of the National Park according to their sensitivity to new lighting. For developments outside the National Park's urban areas, a maximum lux level for new lighting is proposed. A Dark Sky Core area, which all development must protect, is identified. This is based on the areas with the darkest skies in the National Park. A two kilometre buffer zone surrounds the core area. Appropriate curfews and timings for new lighting will be applied spatially across these zones.

Appreciate the quality of our skies for yourself at the South Downs Dark Night Skies Festival from 9 – 25 February
www.southdowns.gov.uk/enjoy/events/dark-skies-festival-2018/



DRAFT DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS

The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) has produced draft Development Briefs for four sites allocated for housing through the South Downs Local Plan.

These four sites are being considered for development in the draft South Downs Local Plan but are not currently covered by a Neighbourhood Plan. The draft Development Briefs are works in progress and do not prejudice whether or not these sites will be allocated.

The draft Development Briefs set out the principles that any visions, designs or plans for these sites must follow – for example any specific provisions for wildlife, recreation, services or access. The briefs are not prescriptive plans or designs for the sites – those will be the responsibility of future developers in

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consultation with the local community – but they will give the local community and other stakeholders more security and confidence as to what development on each site might look like.

As with any site in the National Park, developers will still need to apply to the SDNPA for planning permission but, provided the principles have been followed, this process should be faster.

The four draft Development Briefs were approved by the SDNPA Planning Committee at their meeting on 18 January 2018 subject to changes requested by the committee. The revised draft Development Briefs will be opened for public consultation in February 2018.

If major changes are required as a result of the consultation a further report and presentation will be made to Planning committee. If the site allocation in the draft Local Plan does not subsequently come forward the Development Brief will be discarded.



LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

Thank you to everyone who responded to the consultation on the South Downs Local Plan: Pre-Submission that took place between September and November 2017. More than 500 individuals and organisations took part and we are now reviewing all the comments.

Consultation responders ranged from members of the public, parish councils, developers and organisations, to utility providers, district and county councils and Government agencies. In total you made more than 2,400 individual points about the Local Plan. We are currently reviewing and drafting the changes needed to the Local Plan as a result.

We will present the final version of the Local Plan to the National Park Authority Meeting on 22 March and we will submit it to the Secretary of State for examination by the end of March. We will also submit all our evidence documents including all the responses

received to the Pre-Submission Consultation in both their original and summarised form. We will make all these documents available on our website and in printed form.

If you have signed up to our consultation database you will receive confirmation when this happens.

Once the Local Plan has been submitted, the Secretary of State will designate a Planning Inspector to hold an examination into the Local Plan. Again, everyone on the Local Plan database will receive a letter or email (depending on preference) when we know the dates of the public hearings.

Sign up to the Local Plan list at consult.southdowns.gov.uk/consult.ti/system/register



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

- **Ditchling, Streat & Westmeston and Petworth** NDPs have passed their independent examinations. The SDNPA will prepare Decision Statements for these plans ahead of them going to referendum this spring.
- **Patching and Bury** will both be going to referendum on 1 March.
- **East Meon and Liss** were made (adopted) by the SDNPA on the 14 December 2017.

More information about all of the SDNPA Neighbourhood Plans can be viewed at: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/community-planning/neighbourhood-development-plans/>

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WHOLE ESTATE PLAN UPDATE

The SDNPA endorsed two Whole Estate Plans (WEPS) in 2017, with several more in the pipeline for 2018.

Following the media coverage of the Wiston WEP and acknowledgement of the innovative approach we have taken to WEPS, staff were invited to present to CLA North at Newby Hall about why the SDNPA introduced them, the benefits of incorporating them into Park policy, which is a first, and how this has been achieved. The WEPS guidance is currently being updated, to address some of the feedback received on the process so far, as well as monitoring how endorsed WEPS are being used across the National Park.

Find out more at www.southdowns.gov.uk/care-for/supporting-communities-business/whole-estate-plans/



S106 UPDATE

From 1 September to 31 December 2017 we have allocated £155,865.40 through S106 contributions:

- £6,384.01 to part fund **replacing play equipment at Newman Collard Playing Fields** in Liss Parish
- £528.00 to the **Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership**
- £131,203.39 to Midhurst Town Council to **part-fund the purchase of The Old Library Knockhundred Row, Midhurst which will be used as a community facility** as well as their offices.
- £17,750.00 to EHDC to part fund the employment of **a community development worker to specifically assist with integrating the Causeway development** into the wider community.



AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT PUBLISHED

The Authority Monitoring Report for the financial year 2016/17 reports on how we have been producing planning documents and cooperating with other organisations.

The report also measures progress against numerous indicators. For example:

- Baseline data has been established for numerous indicators included in the Pre-Submission South Downs Local Plan.
- **4km of new non-motorised multi user routes** were delivered in 2016/17.
- Planning permission was granted for **eight new or expanded cultural facilities**.
- There is an **up-to-date five year supply of deliverable housing sites in the South Downs National Park**, both against the proposed provision figure in the South Downs Local Plan and against the benchmarks and housing allocation targets for specific areas of the National Park set out in Joint Core Strategies.
- A net **total of 250 new dwellings were completed** in the year.

The full Authority Monitoring Report is available at www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/national-park-local-plan/authority-monitoring-report-amr/



MEET OUR NEW APPRENTICE PLANNER

Sergio Chapman-Salas, the National Park Authority's first ever Apprentice Planner, started work with us in September 2017. We asked him to tell us about why he decided to become a planner and whether reality is living up to expectation.

"I enjoyed geography at school and the idea of living more sustainably. Planning fits both of these so seemed like a good career choice. I was looking at university courses when I found out I could also get

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into planning through an apprenticeship. I liked the idea of learning on the job, getting first-hand experience and getting paid – it seems so much better than just learning from books!

"I found two available and was lucky enough to become the National Park Authority's first Apprentice Planner. I spend one day every week earning my town planning support qualification at Chichester University.

"My first day was with the Planning Policy team. It was the same day they launched the final consultation on the South Downs Local Plan which meant that there was lots to learn but also lots to get involved with. I enjoy being part of a team sharing ideas and working together on a big goal.

"I'm still getting to grips with all the different work that planners do. I'm currently with the validation team, then I'll be working with Development Management and finally the Major Projects Team so at the end of my two years apprenticeship I should have a good insight across all the different areas. I definitely want to stay in planning so after that I might go to university to study for a full RTPi qualification or I might continue to learn on the job.

"My first experience in planning has led me to believe that the best approach to take as a planner is to be open minded and willing to learn!

APPEALS

It's important to understand how Planning Inspectors are interpreting the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the variety of Local Plans which remain in place until the South Downs Local Plan is adopted. By monitoring appeal decisions we are able to identify patterns and trends that can be used to inform how future applications are considered.

- The Authority continues to receive appeal decisions on a number of schemes of varying size and complexity. This has included schemes for the replacement of single glazed windows with sash windows on listed buildings (two appeals, both of which were dismissed) and at the other end of the spectrum, an agricultural workers dwelling in the Winchester area (dismissed) and an overflow car park for a hotel in Bepton, near Midhurst.
- The application for the overflow car park in particular raised issues in relation to landscape impact and also amenity impact on a neighbouring property. The Inspector in this particular case did not feel that suitable conditions could be imposed which could reasonably control the impact on a neighbouring property from people using the car park. In relation to the Landscape Impact of the proposal, the Inspector confirmed:
"I consider the sub-division of the field and the undertaking of the interior planting would result in the site having a contrived appearance within what is a quite simple fieldscape, with that simply being characteristic of the landscape of this part of the National Park. I therefore consider that the car park would be an uncharacteristic urbanising element in the area."
- The Authority currently have a success rate of approximately 70% on appeals since April 2017. We have had 57 appeal decisions – 47% of which were within Chichester District and 19% in East Hampshire. The remainder were fairly evenly spread across the rest of the National Park.



Work for us

We're recruiting for a Planning Policy Lead with a salary of up to £44,884. Applications close on 4 February 2018.

Find out more at

www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/job-vacancies/



Free breakfast seminar on affordable housing

Landowners and agents are invited to join Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) on 16 March 18 to hear how to turn your land into an asset for you and your community. Find out how you can help ensure our villages thrive economically and socially by providing affordable homes for local people.

08:30 to 10:30 on Friday 16 March 2018 at Sparsholt College. For more information email contact@harah.org.uk or 01962 848088



SDNPA Planning Committee meetings

Our next Planning Committee meeting will take place on 8 February 2018.

You can watch a live webcast of the meeting, as well as recordings of previous meetings at

southdowns.public-i.tv/core/portal/home

Find agendas to past Planning Committee meetings at [www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/committees-](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/committees-meetings/committees/planning-committee/)

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