

Report to **Policy & Resources Committee**  
Date **22 September 2022**  
By **Major Planning Projects and Performance Manager**  
Title of Report **Annual Review of Planning Performance: Financial Year 2021/22**  
**Note**

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**Recommendation: Committee is recommended to**

**1) Receive and consider the Annual Review of Planning Performance.**

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**I. Introduction**

- I.1 Planning is one of the strongest tools we have for furthering the National Park's statutory purposes and duty as well as an important statutory function of the Authority. Planning also plays an important part in helping deliver the vision, objectives and outcomes of the National Park's Partnership Management Plan (PMP).
- I.2 The SDNPA is one of the largest planning authorities in the country, both geographically and in terms of the number of applications and other related matters dealt with. Consequently the Authority's Planning Directorate, together with our five host authorities, interacts with many thousands of people a year and this contact may be an individual's only contact with the Authority.
- I.3 Whilst a summary of all appeal decisions is reported to Planning Committee on a quarterly basis it is Policy and Resources Committee that has wider oversight of the Authority's planning performance. This report sets out, in a presentation at Appendix I, an overview of planning performance in the financial year 2021/22. Information is provided on:
- i) Selected Case Studies as examples of delivery of the Partnership Management Plan, which previous Policy and Resources Committee commented upon positively
  - ii) Overall Workload
  - iii) Section 101 agreements
  - iv) Call ins
  - v) Validation
  - vi) Speed of decision making
  - vii) Appeals
  - viii) Enforcement
  - ix) Ensuring quality
  - x) Current performance focus
  - xi) Challenges

1.4 Whilst the report calls on the committee to receive and consider the content of the performance report, the terms of reference for the committee include considering if the committee wishes to make any recommendations arising from its consideration of the report. Any such recommendations would be subject to a vote at the committee meeting.

## **2. Executive Summary**

2.1 Planning performance, as an Authority and within that of the five host authorities, is subject to regular performance management with performance being consistently monitored, evaluated and reported on a wide variety of metrics. Planning performance is also discussed with the host authorities at a senior officer level, as well as at regular meetings the Authority Chair and Chief Executive have with their counterparts at the host authorities. It is also rigorously monitored by central Government through quarterly 'statistical returns' and an Annual Monitoring report that contains quantitative and qualitative data.

2.2 Overall planning performance continues to be good and all government targets have been met. Speed of decision making, although still good, has reduced slightly from the previous financial year (81% in 2021/22 compared to 85% in time in 2020/21) and improving this is a current focus of work. The new Section 101 agreements with our host authorities come into effect on 1 October 2022 and these incorporate more ambitious targets in terms of speed of decision making together with rigorous assessment. The negotiations of the S101 contracts themselves (now concluded) was a challenge in 2021/22, not least given rising costs.

2.3 Appeal performance was good in the financial year whilst our Enforcement teams have continued to deal with a high number of complaints and correspondence about alleged breaches across the Park.

2.4 As shown in the attached presentation there is room for improvement including addressing variations in host authority performance, principally with Lewes District Council who have had issues with speed of decision making throughout the year. However with new staff resource and an agreed action plan this is now improving.

2.5 Although just outside the 2021/22 financial year, in June the Authority's planning work was recognised with the award of the Royal Town Planning Institute's South East of England Chair's Award for 'supporting greener planning in practice'. This was awarded for the Authority's overall strategy in managing sustainable development and driving environmental gain.

2.6 Moving forward dealing with the current level of vacancies in the SDNPA planning team will be key and we are attempting to fill all vacant posts within the Planning Department. Therefore whilst the fundamentals of the Authority's Planning function are sound (including an award winning Local Plan), and whilst the medium term outlook is good, it is fair to say that the short term outlook is challenging given recent employee turnover and the accompanying number of vacant posts.

2.7 Finally, the summary at Appendix I provides an overview of planning performance but it is important to note that each year the Authority also produces an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) each December. The AMR reports on a number of planning documents such as the South Downs Local Plan, neighbourhood development plans and waste and minerals plans. It considers the performance of policies across the National Park, and trends against various indicators including those directly affected by the planning process as well as those more indirectly affected.

2.8 The AMR includes all indicators which are monitored along with any relevant targets, and which Local Plan policy each indicator relates to. An output is set out for each indicator followed by a brief commentary highlighting the key findings of the output and relating these back to local and Government policies.

## **3. Planning Newsletter**

3.1 Since Autumn 2017 the Authority has produced a newsletter three times a year covering key planning news. The newsletter also showcases some of the Authority's key

achievements in planning and the distribution list has grown to over 1,400 people. The last newsletter, from Summer 2022, is included for reference at Appendix 2.

#### 4. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No further decisions required. Another update on planning performance will be presented to Policy and Resources Committee in 2023.
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	Not directly – the delivery of planning services are resourced from the Authority’s core budget and income brought in from Planning.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	Performance management is established practice for ensuring value for money. {
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	None, but note there is social value to the partnership arrangements
Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority’s equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	As this is a monitoring report there are no direct equality considerations arising out of this report. The Planning system is delivered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Any individual projects such as the Local Plan or Shoreham Cement Works Area Action Plan also go through the Authority’s internal Equality Diversity and Inclusion assessment
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Data Protection implications?	None arising directly. The Planning function is undertaken in accordance with all appropriate data protection requirements.
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy?	None directly arising from this monitoring report.

#### 5. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

- 5.1 There are risks to the Authority and the National Park if the Planning system is not operating efficiently or effectively. However, there are limited risks arising from this report itself.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Variation in authority performance overall may be subject to adverse media comment	Medium	Low	Officers monitor performance regularly and addressing performance variations is discussed, with actions agreed, at senior officer level. An annual update on planning performance to Members is an important part of performance monitoring and local government openness.

## **Mike Hughes**

### **South Downs National Park Authority**

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Appendices 1. Presentation – Annual Review of Planning Performance – Financial Year 2021/22,

2. SDNPA Planning Newsletter, Summer 2022,

SDNPA Consultees Chief Executive; Director of Planning; Director of Countryside Policy and Management; Monitoring Officer; Legal Services

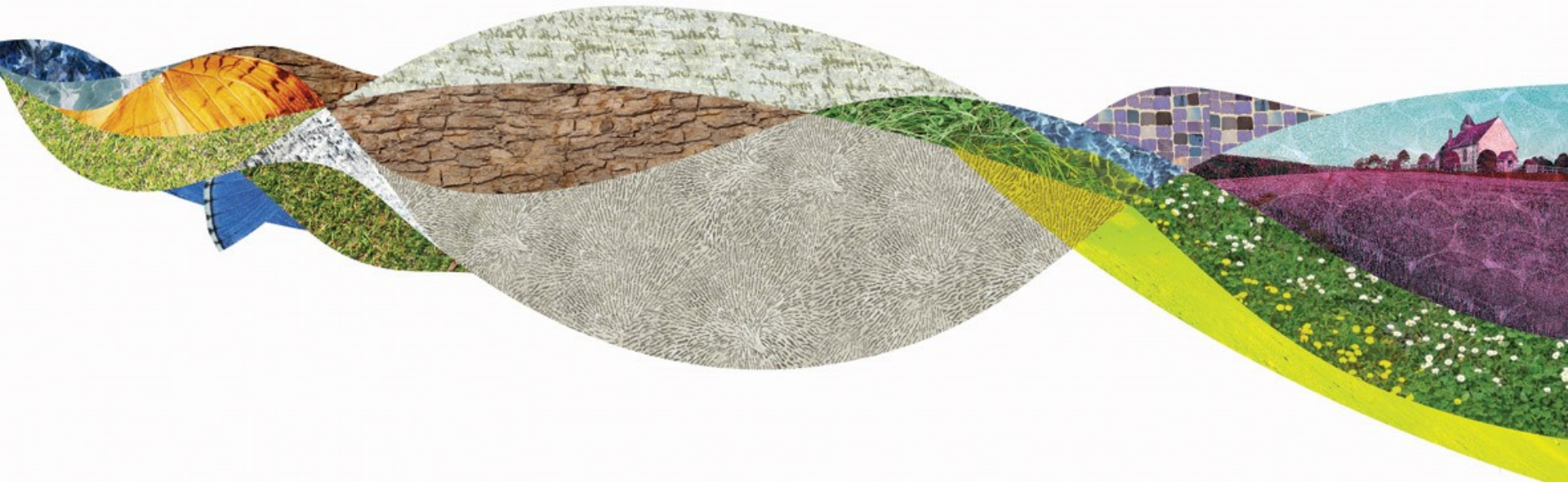
External Consultees None

Background Documents Web links:

[SDNPA Annual Monitoring Reports](#)

# Annual Review of Planning Performance - Financial Year 2021/22

Policy and Resources Committee – 22 September



# Contents

- Case Studies – Delivery of Partnership Management Plan
- Overall Workload
- Section 101 agreements
- Call ins
- Validation
- Speed of decision making
- Appeals
- Enforcement
- Ensuring quality
- Current performance focus
- Challenges

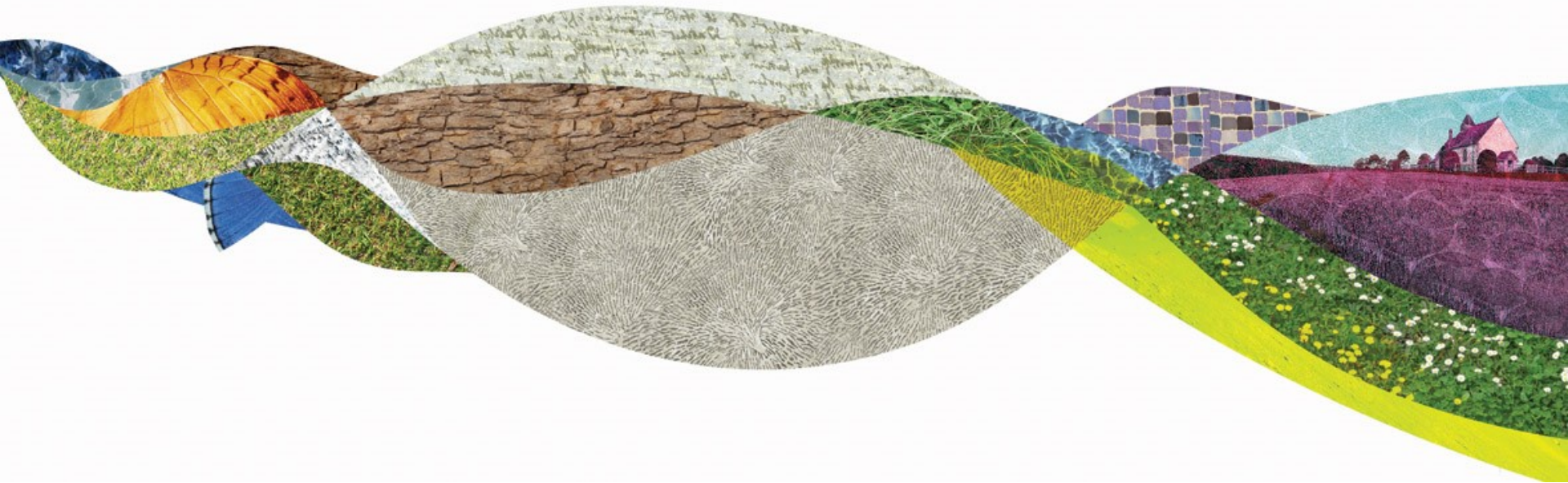


# Partnership Management Plan (PMP)

- The SDNPA PMP 2020-2025 is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications
- Used proportionally and appropriately – unlikely to be key issue in a householder extension
- In addition to the PMP Vision and 10 Outcomes the SDNPA PMP identifies 5 Major Issues:
  - Climate Emergency
  - Economy
  - Wellbeing
  - Biodiversity
  - New Housing and Infrastructure
- Case Studies of planning permissions issued in 2021/22 are provided showing how the Authority's planning function helps deliver the PMP (and the Authority's Corporate Plan)



# Case Studies (decisions from 2021/22)





# The Climate Emergency

## Old Malling Farm, Lewes

- Zero carbon housing (all 226 dwellings)
- Electric vehicle charging points for all dwellings
- Low water use, Green roofs and new Green Infrastructure
- 12% Biodiversity Net Gain
- 50% affordable housing (including Lewes Low Cost Housing)
- £1.7m toward walking/cycling and road improvements



# Economy

## Marwell Activity Centre, Owslebury

- 40 new holiday lodges set within new landscaping (including new native tree planting and a small wetland)
- Helps diversify Centre's income stream and expand the Park's tourism offer
- Eight lodges will have green roofs and there will be four electric vehicle charging points
- Biodiversity net gain in excess of 10%



# Wellbeing

## Former Pells Primary School, Lewes

- 32 affordable homes (100%) on this exceptions site
- Delivery of Lewes Low Cost Homes (cheaper form of affordable housing in the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan)
- All dwellings zero carbon
- Biodiversity net gain in excess of 10%
- Community use of the previous forest school area
- New walking/cycling path



# Biodiversity

## Petersfield Aldi

- Once completed will have the largest green roof in the National Park (with a wildflower mix)
- Planting of 32 new trees on this brownfield site; in excess of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain
- BREEAM Excellent and use of renewable technologies
- 4 on site electric vehicle charging points
- 50 new jobs



# New Housing and Infrastructure

## AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT 2021

### A THRIVING LIVING LANDSCAPE



...increasing numbers

**RED KITES**



**36%** ...average gain in a sample of planning permissions

**BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN**



**CALL FOR NATURE SITES LAUNCHED**

...by SDNPA, to find potential land to contribute towards nature recovery in the National Park



### PEOPLE CONNECTED WITH PLACES

**34** **NEW SITES**  
...were permitted for Visitor Accommodation



including:  
**12** **TREE HOUSES**



**13,000m<sup>2</sup>** **NEW FLOOR SPACE**  
...for Community Facilities were permitted



### TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

**175** **NEW HOMES**  
...were completed



of which:

**11** **WERE AFFORDABLE**



**64%** ...were completed on Brownfield land (previously developed land)

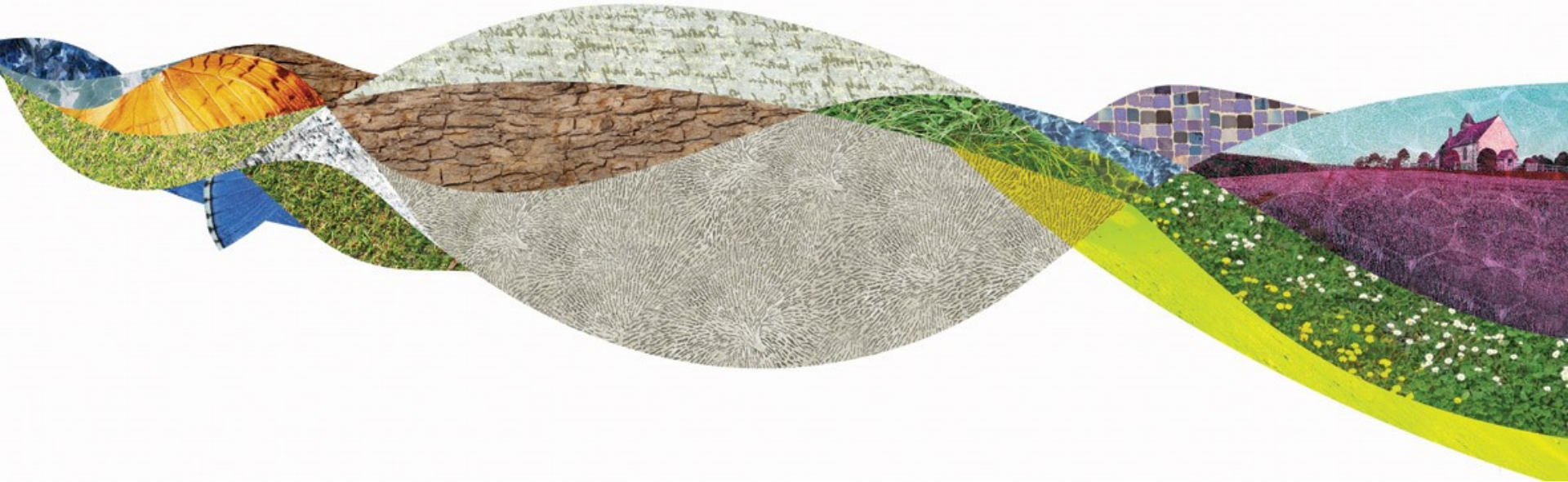


**6** **NEW VITICULTURE SCHEMES**  
...were permitted



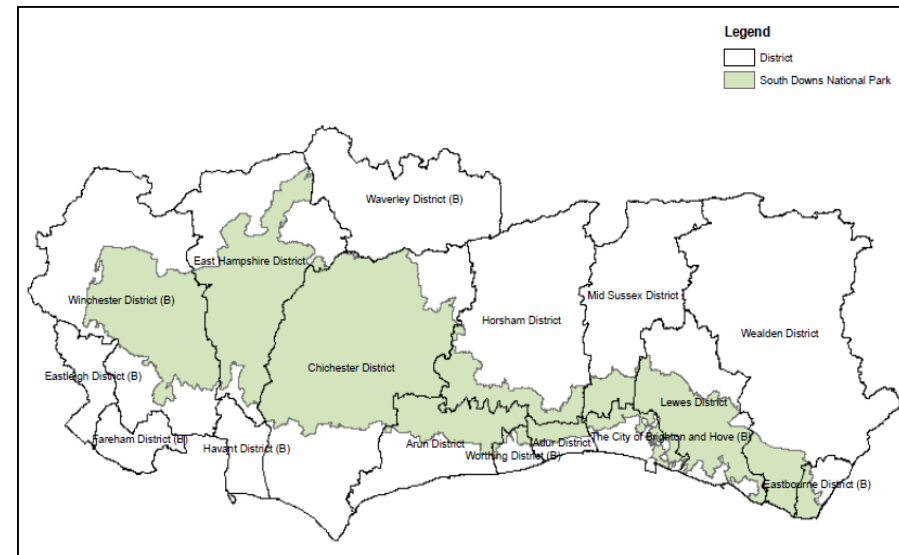
**SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK**

# Performance Statistics

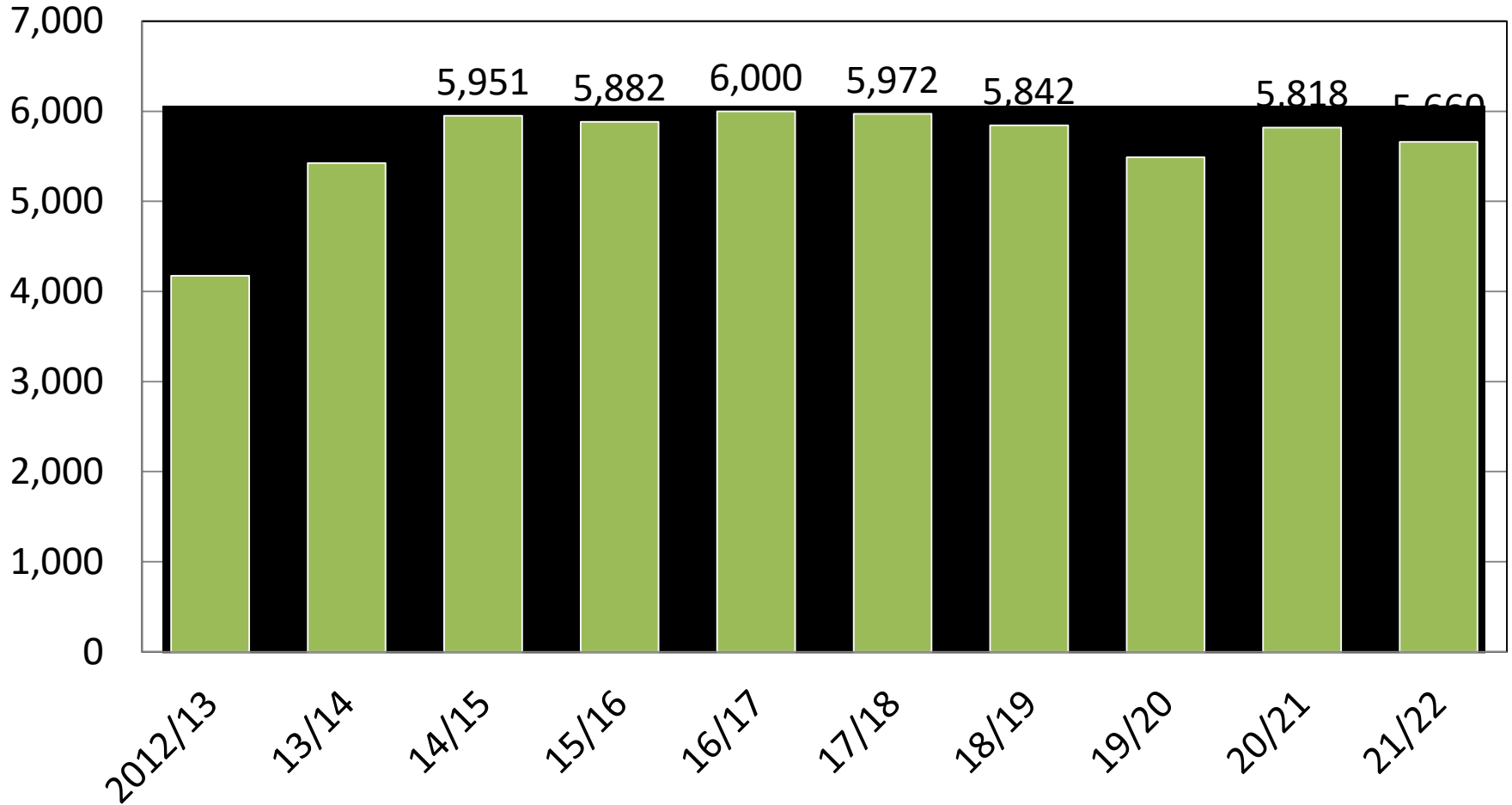


# Overall Workload

- The SDNPA is one of the largest Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in England:
  - Covers one of the largest geographic areas
  - Within the top 30 largest planning authorities in the country, as measured by the number of applications dealt with (there are just over 300 LPAs in England)
  - We determine more planning applications than most London Boroughs



# Overall Workload – All Cases





# Section 101 Contracts

- SDNPA itself deals with all planning matters (planning applications, enforcement and appeals) within the following District Council areas where they lie within the National Park:
  - Adur
  - Arun
  - Brighton and Hove
  - Mid Sussex
  - Wealden
  - Worthing
- SDNPA deals with all minerals and waste matters across the National Park.
- We have contracts with 5 host authorities to deliver planning services (planning applications, enforcement and appeals) on our behalf. These contracts have recently been renegotiated and new S101 contracts take effect from 1st October 2022.
- The host authorities deal with approximately 80% of all planning applications handled by SDNPA.

# Call ins

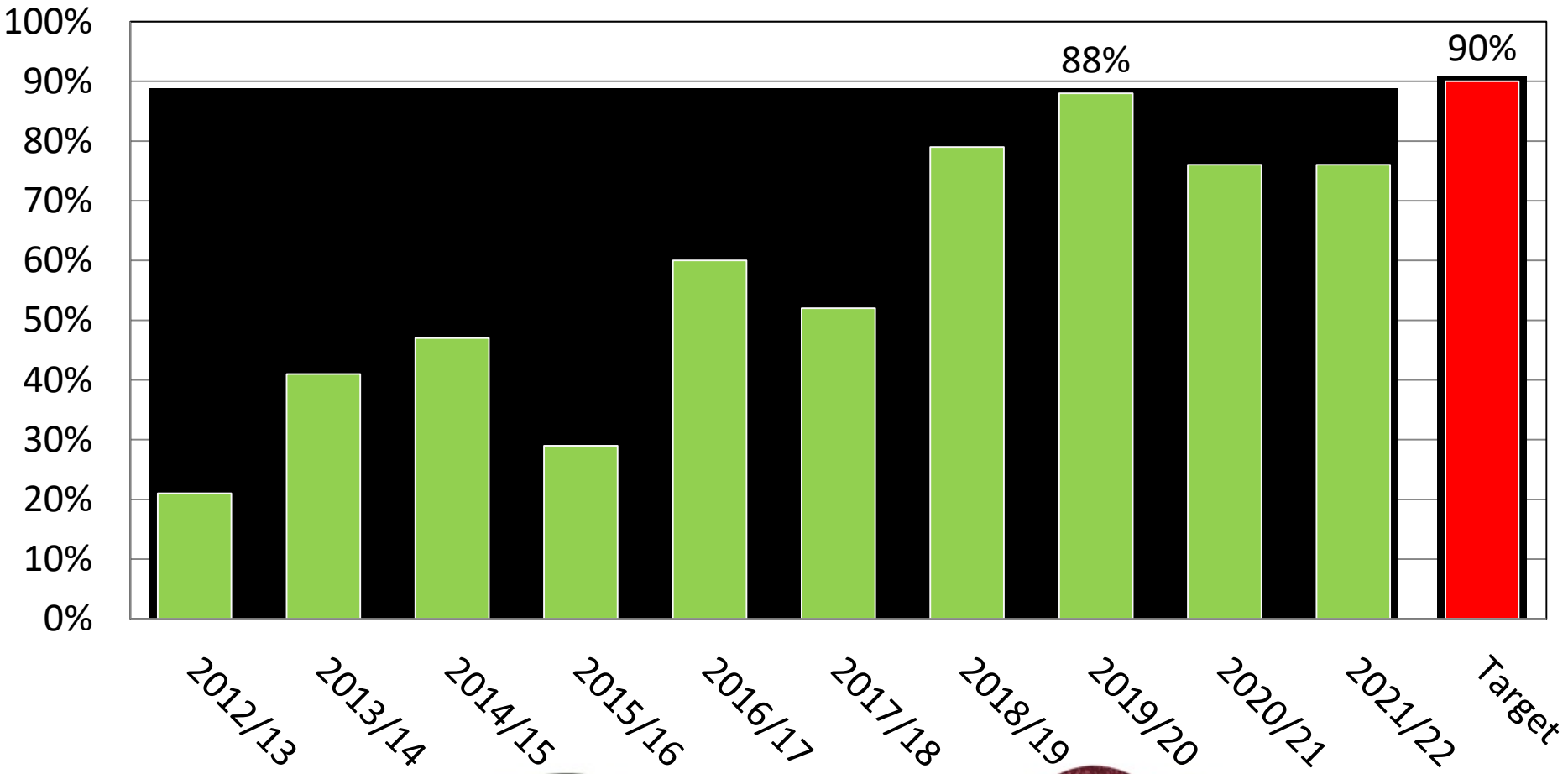
- The biggest or otherwise potentially most consequential applications are called in from the host authorities for determination by the SDNPA. However some called in cases are minor and are called in purely for consistency and efficiency reasons as we dealt with the site or proposal previously.
- 309 applications were called in between 1 April 2019 and 10<sup>th</sup> July 2022 of which 30 are unresolved and 30 applications were withdrawn by the applicant. This leaves 249 applications, of which:
  - 60 applications have been reported to SDNPA Planning Committee
  - 57 applications were minor material and non-material changes to earlier applications (called in simply as we dealt with the original application)
  - 55 were called in because SDNPA was dealing with associated enforcement work, because the Estate concerned had a Whole Estate Plan or because they were consultations sent to us by adjoining Local Planning Authorities.
  - 34 were time limited applications (SDNPA generally has 4, 6 or 8 weeks to determine and if we do not consent is granted by default).
  - The remaining (43) were determined by officers under delegated powers. Many had limited public interest whilst a number were 'in principle' refusals.

# Validation Performance

- Validation is the proportion of all applications that are either made valid or invalidated (with reasons) within 5 working days
- This is a SDNPA performance measure, we do not report this performance to Government
- Speed - and accuracy - of validation is an important factor in user's experience of the planning system
- There has been wide variation in host authority performance on this metric in the past.
- Validation performance remains below our internal target.

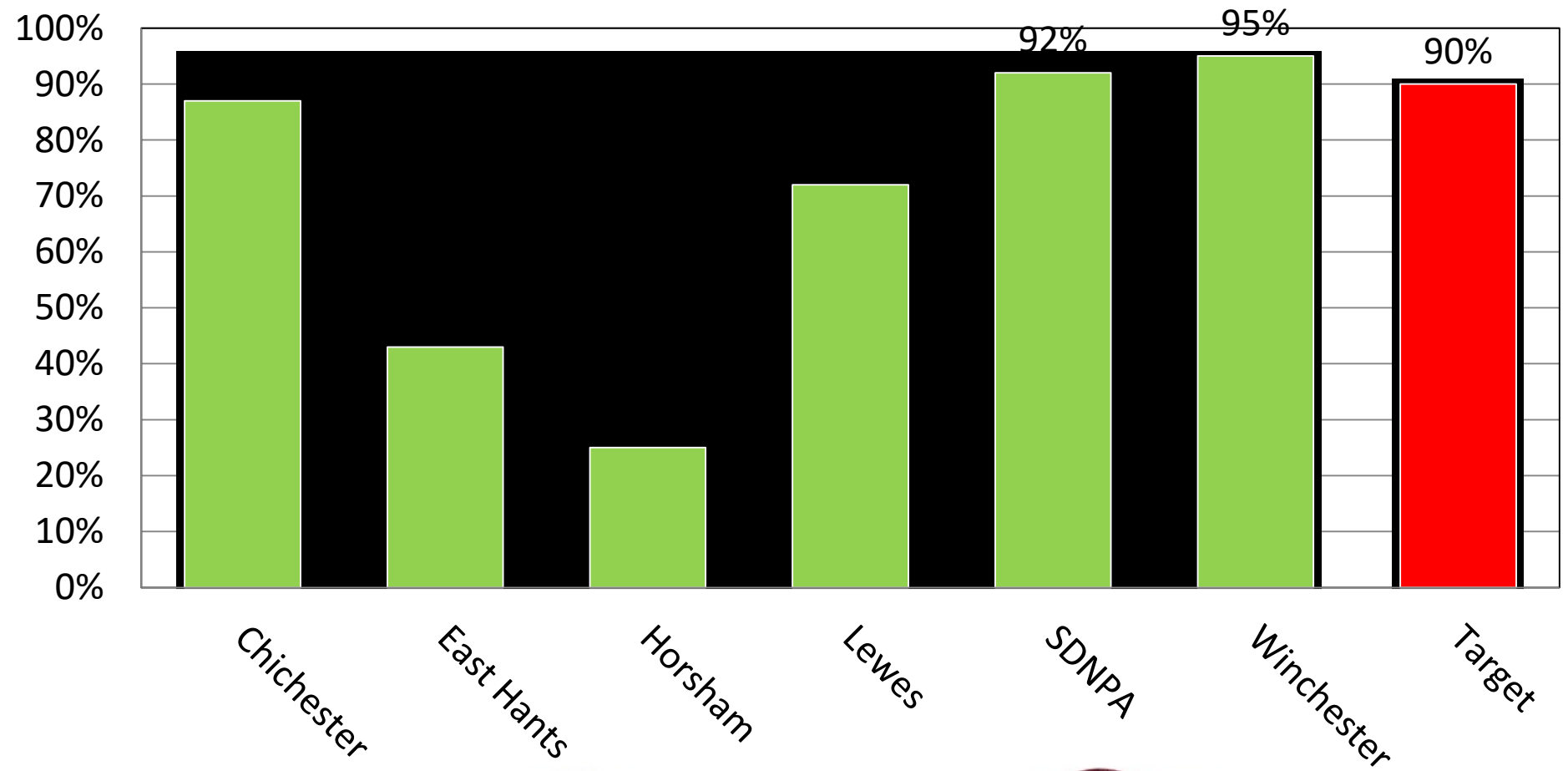


# Validation Performance (within 5 working days)





# 2021/22 Validation performance by host authority (within 5 working days)



# Different types of planning applications

- **Major** = 10+ dwellings, over a 1,000 sq m of floorspace, site area exceeds half a hectare, minerals applications, waste applications.
- **Others** - 1-9 dwellings; up to 999 sq m of office, industrial, retail floorspace; householders; change of use, listed building consent.
- Taken together they are known as ‘PS2’ applications
- A consistent benchmark for performance management and consultation requirements across England.



# Government Requirements – Speed of Decision Making

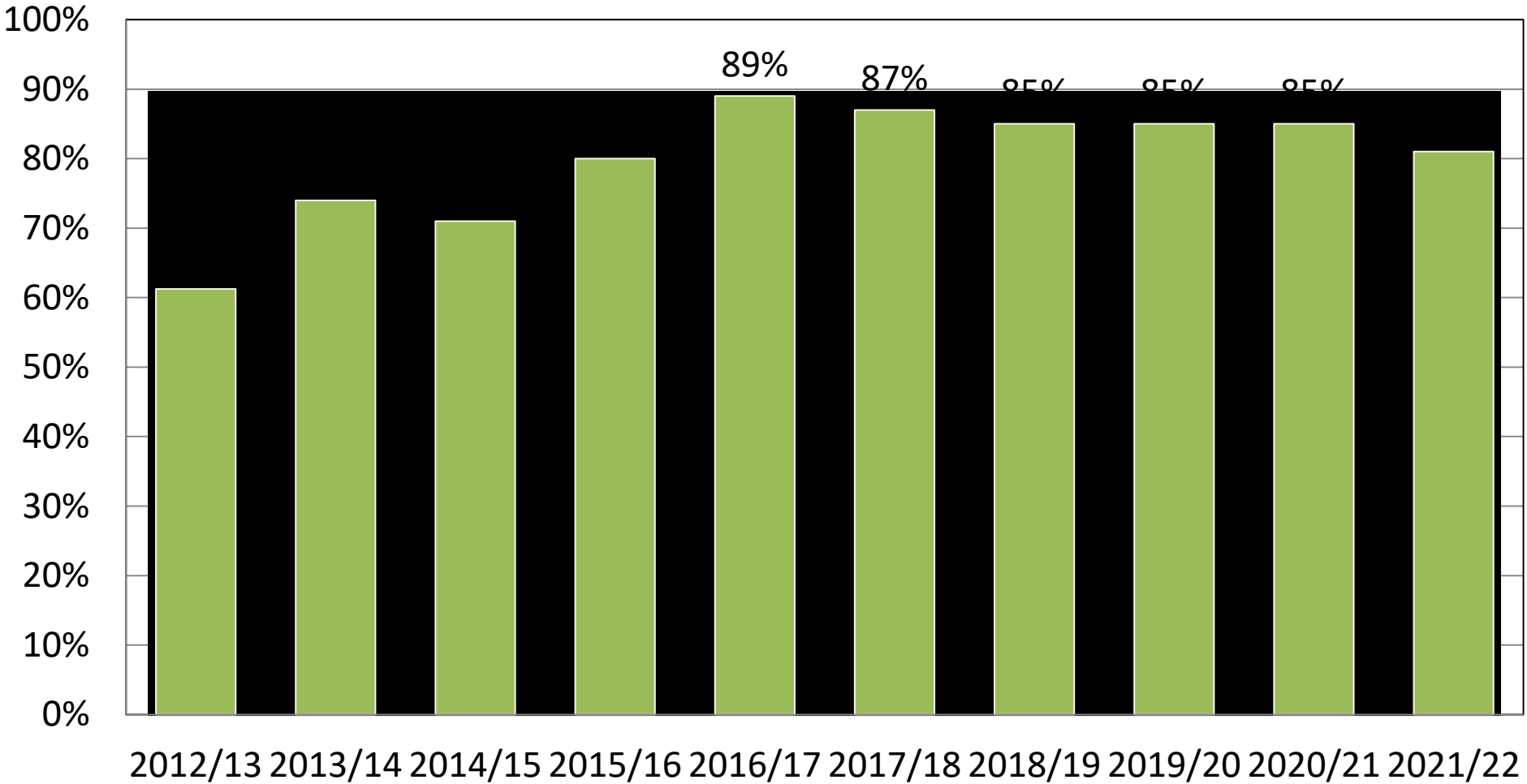
- That at least 60% of **major** applications are determined within time. There is a 13 week target determination period (16 weeks if EIA development)
- That at least 70% of '**others**' are determined within time. There is a 8 week target determination period.
- If these targets are not met it could result in the Authority being put into special measures and having planning powers removed. The Authority is comfortably in excess of these targets.
- There is also a quality criterion. No more than 10% of our total planning decisions can be overturned at appeal in a 2 year period. For the 2 year period the Government specify (October 2019 to September 2021) less than 2% of our total decisions have been overturned by the Planning Inspectorate.





# Speed of Decision Making Overall

## – PS2 applications in time







# Speed of Decision Making 2020/21 and 2021/22 - **MAJORS**

	2020/21		2021/22	
	Total Number of applications	%age in time	Total Number of applications	%age in time
<b>SDNPA OVERALL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>89%</b>
Chichester	5	100%	7	100%
East Hants	15	67%	5	60%
Horsham	0	N/a	0	N/a
Lewes	1	100%	1	100%
SDNPA	29	90%	38	89%
Winchester	4	100%	3	100%





# Speed of Decision Making 2020/21 and 2021/22 - **OTHERS**

	2020/21		2021/22	
	Total Number of applications	%age in time	Total Number of applications	%age in time
<b>SDNPA OVERALL</b>	<b>1,977</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>2,175</b>	<b>81%</b>
Chichester	611	87%	657	83%
East Hants	444	91%	446	85%
Horsham	83	88%	103	82%
Lewes	307	60%	385	59%
SDNPA	252	88%	306	91%
Winchester	280	96%	278	88%



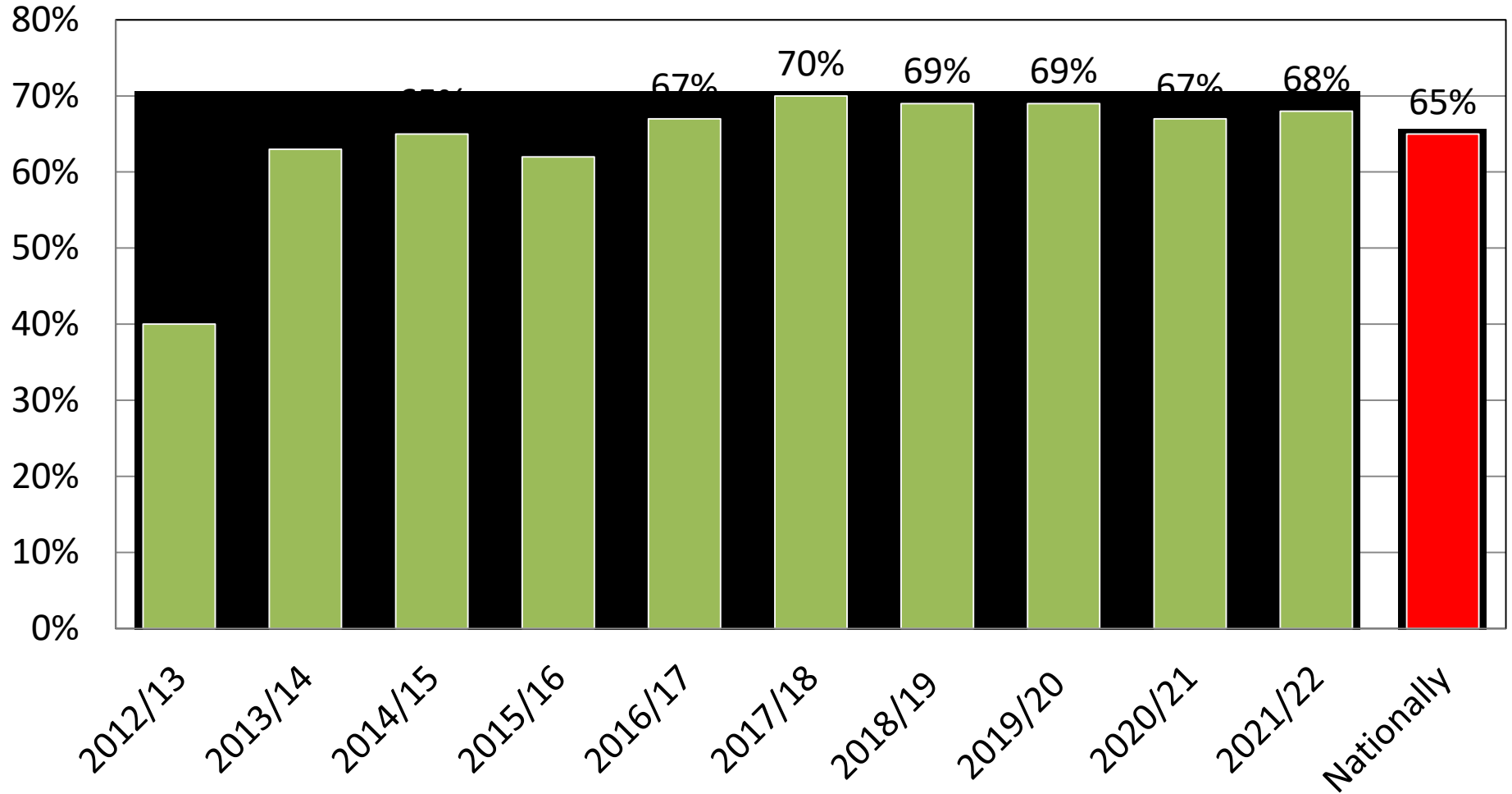
# Minerals and Waste

	Total number of applications determined in 2020/21	Total number of applications determined in 2021/22	Percentage in time
Majors	4	6	100% (in both financial years)

- Government require at least 60% of these decisions to be made on time
- Again there is a quality criterion from government. No more than 10% of our total minerals and waste decisions can be overturned at appeal in a 2 year period. This means that if we lost just 2 appeals we would not meet this criterion and would be at risk of designation. This is a risk common to most Mineral Planning Authorities, especially National Park Authorities, given the low numbers of applications involved.



# Appeal Performance - Dismissed



# Appeal Performance

	Total number of appeal decisions received	Number dismissed	Percentage dismissed
2021/22	60	41	68%
2020/21	81	54	67%
2019/20	123	85	69%
2018/19	106	73	69%
2017/18	80	56	70%

- A summary of all appeal decisions is reported to Planning Committee quarterly

# Appeal Performance by Host Authority over 3 years

	Number of appeal decisions between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2022	Percentage dismissed
Chichester	88	60%
East Hants	43	77%
Horsham	9	78%
Lewes	23	83%
SDNPA	69	59%
Winchester	34	71%

# Planning Enforcement

- We report the number of enforcement notices to Government each quarter but there is no requirement to report on speed of enforcement
- There was a notable increase in 2020/21 and 2021/22 in complex enforcement cases, including those requiring injunctions.
- In 2021/22 687 new enforcement cases were opened, whilst 688 cases were closed.
- In 2020/21 669 new enforcement cases were opened, whilst 558 cases were closed (impact of Covid).
- However in 2018/19 and 2019/20 more enforcement cases were closed than opened.
- The Authority monitors the time taken to determine enforcement cases and Link officers run through older cases with host authorities every other month

# Planning Enforcement by host authority – Last 5 years

Host Authority	Enforcement cases OPENED between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2022	Enforcement cases CLOSED between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2022
Chichester	775	784
East Hampshire	760	751
Horsham	154	134
Lewes	430	405
SDNPA	1,056	1,055
Winchester	365	363



# Ensuring Quality – Regular Performance Management

- Role of link officers and senior officers
- Regular relationship meetings with senior staff at the host authorities
- Regular officer groups – development management, enforcement and technical support to share good practice and updated procedures
- Agreed action plans produced where there are specific matters of concern
- All complaints received reviewed
- Agents forum every 6 months



# Current Performance Focus

1. Improving speed of decision making
2. Speeding up dealing with enforcement cases
3. Improving communication and ease of telephone access to planning officers
4. Improving the information available on our website in response to customer feedback

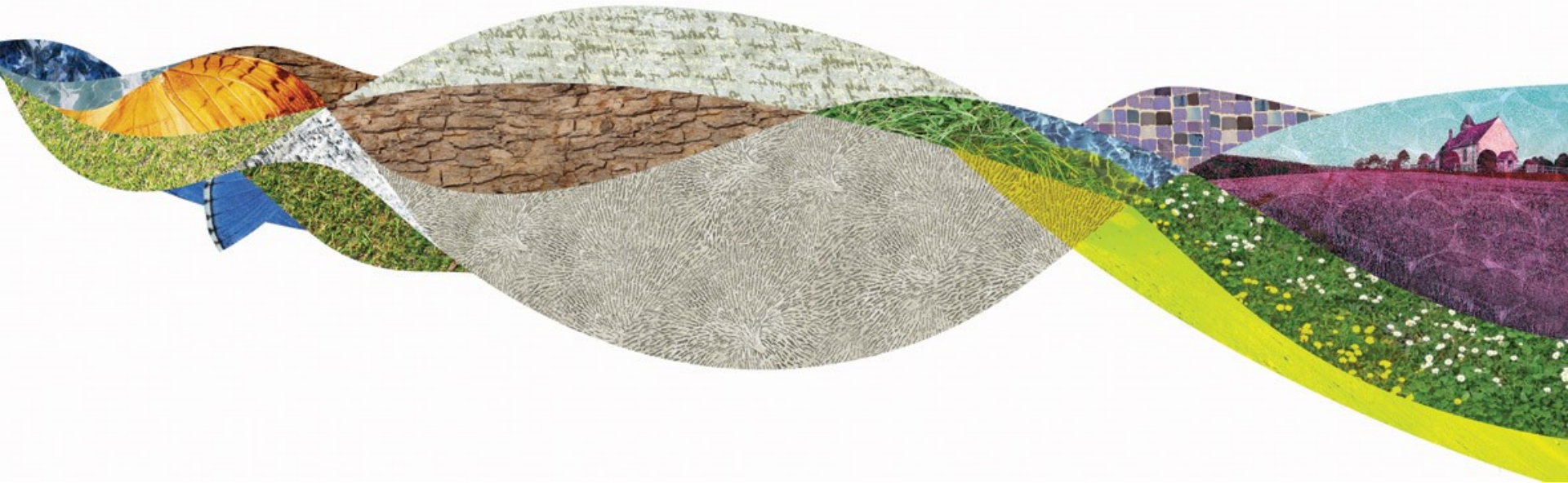


# Main Challenges

- Vacancies and continued difficulty recruiting qualified and experienced planners is an issue for most LPAs in the South East. However the SDNPA is under particular pressure currently as there are 8 vacancies (out of 35) in the planning team. These vacancies are being advertised.
- Maintaining and improving service quality given continued pressure on public sector budgets. Use of consultants in the South East is the norm.
- Development industry facing increasing materials (costs of materials, labour, inflation, supply chains and landowner expectations) such that delivering policy compliant sites is harder
- Inflation placing pressure on our contract costs (and wages)



# Thank You



# 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 [planningnewsletter@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:planningnewsletter@southdowns.gov.uk)

## Call for Sites launched by National Park

**The South Downs National Park Authority is offering an opportunity for individuals, landowners and developers to put forward sites for potential development.**

The “Call for Sites” launches today as the National Park Authority undertakes a review of its Local Plan – a process that is required by law to ensure the Local Plan is up-to-date.

Potential sites can be put forward for consideration for the following range of uses:

- Housing includes new homes, 100% affordable housing, specialised care, for example, for older persons, self and custom-build homes
- Economic development, including offices, manufacturing and warehousing
- Renewable energy
- Gypsy & Traveller, and travelling showpeople sites
- Biodiversity net gain (where the natural environment is improved) and nutrient offsetting sites.



The National Park Authority is also looking for nominations for “Local Green Spaces”, which local communities think are demonstrably special and should be protected from development.

The Local Plan and neighbourhood plans already have a number of



designated Local Green Spaces, but communities are being invited to nominate more sites for consideration.

The call-out runs until 28 September.

Lucy Howard, Planning Policy Manager for the National Park Authority, said: “We’re launching our Call for Sites as part of the Local Plan Review, which Government requires us to do every five years.

“It’s important to say this is not just about housing. We’re asking people to put forward sites for a whole range of uses. Just because a site is put forward does not mean it will be allocated and, of course, landscape will always come first in our appraisal.

“This Call for Sites is a key aspect of the Local Plan Review, which is a detailed planning process that is likely to take up to three years.

It’s crucial we keep the Local Plan up-to-date otherwise the National Park would be more vulnerable to speculative developments that haven’t been properly consulted on. This will be a review, rather than a brand new plan, and we will be keeping our award-winning landscape-led approach.”

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

## Affordable homes are given the go-ahead



**New affordable, eco-friendly homes have been given the green light for a Hampshire village.**

The Authority's Planning Committee voted to approve plans for 10 homes, as well as access, car parking, cycle storage and landscaping, on land at Greenway Lane in Buriton.

The land was already allocated for development in the South Downs Local Plan and Mapledean Projects and Metis Homes put forward an application for a high-quality, sustainable development.

The plans include one passive house, electrical vehicle charging points for each dwelling, solar panels on each dwelling, and air source heat pumps.

Water sustainability is high, with water use of 110 litres per person per day and sustainable drainage systems.

Biodiversity enhancements are included in the landscaping proposals, as well as the creation of bee bricks and swift boxes.

The development includes four new affordable homes.

Richard Ferguson, Development Management Lead for the west of the National Park, said: "This small housing development makes good use of a site that was allocated in the South Downs Local Plan.

"We have worked closely with the developers to deliver this allocated site and take on board local community views to ensure there are social benefits in terms of



new affordable homes for people with local connections as well as environmental enhancements such as biodiversity net gain.

"The development is a good addition to this semi-rural location and

improves the settlement edge of Buriton."

Following this summer's general call-out, the Authority will be carrying out a park-wide Land Availability Assessment in the autumn and winter. This will involve looking at the suitability of all the submitted sites.

Lucy added: "We're working very closely with parish and town councils across the National Park, as well as other key partners, to look for new development sites to meet local need without adversely impacting on the landscape of the National Park."

Please visit [www.southdowns.gov.uk/CallForSites2022](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/CallForSites2022) to submit a site to the National Park Authority by midnight on 28 September.

To see some frequently asked questions about the Call for Sites and Local Plan Review [click here](#).

## RTPI gives top award



**The National Park Authority has won a prestigious award from the Royal Town Planning Institute for its record in helping to deliver greener planning.**

The Chair's Award focused on "supporting greener planning in practice" and was given at a ceremony in Brighton.

Simon Taylor, Chair of RTPI South East, said: "The South Downs National Park Authority have demonstrated clear ambitions on how environmental principles and protections can inform sustainable placemaking to support the areas needs and the wider 'greener' planning agenda."

Tim Slaney, Director of Planning, added: "We are so delighted to receive this award.

"In particular because it relates to our overall strategy, development plan and implementation on the ground, rather than any specific policy document or development.



"On behalf of the team, I am grateful to the RTPI South East and hope that the principles we have adopted are a showcase for planning going forward. The Local Plan and work we do are as applicable to places and spaces outside the National Park as they are to those areas inside."

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

# Public have their say on future of derelict site



**A total of 240 responses have been received for a public consultation seeking views on the future redevelopment of Shoreham Cement Works.**

The Authority held an eight-week consultation as it works up a planning blueprint for the 44-hectare site that will guide any future development.

The derelict site in West Sussex is located in the narrowest part of the National Park and offers exceptional opportunities for an exemplar, sustainable mixed-use development.

The cement works were built by the concrete industry pioneer, Oscar Faber.

His other notable works include the Menin Gate in Ypres and he advised Winston Churchill on the construction of the Mulberry Harbours.

Large-scale cement production began on the site at the end of the 19th century and the current buildings were completed in the late 1940s. Chalk extraction and cement production ended in 1991.

The principle of creating a strategic development that is compatible with the special qualities and statutory purposes of the National Park was established in the South Downs Local Plan, which was formally adopted in 2019.

The Authority sought views on the Issue and Options version of the Area Action Plan (AAP), which is effectively a “mini Local Plan” for the site.



The consultation included 28 questions, covering a wide range of topics, including housing, cultural heritage, leisure, and employment.

A specially-commissioned film was produced that sets the scene for the consultation and gave the public a more detailed look at the site.

Ian Phillips, Deputy Chair of the National Park Authority, said: “The site is one of the largest brownfield sites in the south of England and remains a landmark, with its chimney visible for miles around and impressive topography displaying the geology of the South Downs.

“Today this legacy of past industry sits within the South Downs National Park, designated for its natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. The site needs a new role that makes best use of its unique characteristics and relates to the National Park’s purposes – to be regenerated as a place that is truly special and embodies values that will be both relevant and sustainable for a new era.



“The site offers exceptional opportunities for both nature and people as part of a visionary development proposal.”

Four potential development scenarios for the site were used for transport and viability modelling. They are:

- Mixed use scheme with employment and 400 new homes
- Mixed use scheme with employment and 240 new homes
- Mixed use leisure-led scheme and 200 new homes
- Mixed use scheme with employment and 84 new homes.

A mixed used development could include residential and commercial areas, as well as areas for wildlife and leisure.

This initial consultation will help determine which option is taken forward to the next stage of the planning process. The public will then have the opportunity to comment on the Preferred Option of the Area Action Plan, which will include detailed policies related to the future development of the site.

The National Park Authority does not own the site but the final AAP will be the agreed masterplan that will guide any future planning application from a developer.

Tim Slaney, Director of Planning at the National Park Authority, said: “We believe Shoreham Cement Works represents a unique and exciting opportunity for an exceptional quality development that complements and celebrates the site and makes a positive contribution to the National Park. Comments received will help shape the masterplan for the site which needs to be sustainable, deliverable and also inspirational.”

To see some FAQs, visit [www.southdowns.gov.uk/area-action-plan-shoreham-cement-works/faqs/](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/area-action-plan-shoreham-cement-works/faqs/)

## Update on First Homes



**A new scheme aimed at helping first-time buyers and key workers get on the property ladder is now an important consideration for developers and agents.**

Since 28 March, the Government's First Homes scheme is relevant to the determination of all new full and outline applications in the National Park.

The key aspects of First Homes are:

- First Homes are sold with a minimum 30% discount on the open market price. The percentage discount is kept in perpetuity.
- The value of First Homes, after the discount has been applied, is capped at £250,000. Price caps only apply on the initial sale.
- Eligibility criteria applies to buyers; who must be first-time buyers, with a household income not more than £80,000, have a mortgage covering at least 50% of the discounted purchase price value and meet a local connection and/or key worker criteria.

The discounts will apply to the homes forever, meaning that generations of new buyers and the local community will continue to benefit every time the property is sold.

The scheme is in its infancy, but a programme of 1,500 First Homes is being rolled out over the next two years in over 100 locations across England. Some of these sites in the future could be in the National Park.

The Local Plan Review will look at potential options for First Homes in the National Park.

Tim Slaney, Director of Planning, said: "Delivering affordable homes to meet local needs is a priority for the Authority. There is an acute need for affordable homes, with average property prices 16.5 times average local earnings, putting the prospect of buying a house out of reach for many people. We'll seek to implement the Government's First Homes policy while allowing flexibility to prioritise local needs for affordable housing and maintaining a focus on affordable rental tenure."

First Homes are not required to form part of the affordable housing provision on Rural Exception Sites, but may do so if there is a need for First Homes identified by the local community.

## New Dark Skies guidance



**Best practice guidance has been produced by the National Park Authority to help organisers of light festivals and artistic installations.**

The advice has been created to help protect the National Park's Dark Skies, which are so special that they were given international status six years ago.

The simple takeaway message from the report is: The right light, in the right place, at the right time, with the right intensity.

Dan Oakley, Lead Ranger and Dark Skies Lead for the National Park, explained: "Light festivals and illumination events are becoming increasingly common, especially during the winter.

"They offer residents and visitors a unique experience and can transform a location with a magical sense of place and theatricality. Because of their limited operational time, events of this type are not usually subject to planning control and are considered a 'temporary' development. As such, their impact on the local environment is rarely considered.

"The type of lighting used at these events are highly prominent and can be visible for many miles around the site, thereby reducing dark sky quality. Bright, powerful lights can be installed with little regard for dark skies or any basic lighting impact assessment.

"As a result of the growing popularity of these events for commercial, promotional or creative purposes, we're seeking some best practice principles within this guidance for artists, creative commissioners and event organisers to follow. This is not about banning lighting, but simply choosing the right light for the right place and time."

The National Park is one of 20 International Dark Sky Reserves in the world. The designation recognises it as one of the best places globally to stargaze, as well as underlining the biodiversity benefits that having a dark sky brings for a range of animals and plants.

The guidance does not aim to ban Christmas lighting and will not cover domestic Christmas lights or Local Authority Christmas lights mounted on streetlights.

We will give advice and consultation on any aspect of lighting design for events, festivals and creative commissions. Please contact us on 01730 814810 or email [info@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:info@southdowns.gov.uk)



## Parishes benefit from funding boost

Thirty parishes across Hampshire and Sussex have had their direct share of more than **£250,000** from the **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**.



The payments are administered by the Authority on new development and the money goes towards improving infrastructure in communities around transport, recreation, education and biodiversity.

The payments in April were as follows:

- Amberley Parish Council £14,465.43
  - Beddingham with Glynde Parish Council £559.02
  - Bishops Waltham Parish Council £480.69
  - Cheriton Parish Council £450.00
  - Coldwaltham Parish Council £3,669.73
  - Corhampton and Meonstoke Parish Council £1,200.00
  - Droxford Parish Council £32,820.00
  - Easebourne Parish Council £5,722.78
  - East Dean and Friston Parish Council £1,534.42
  - East Meon Parish Council £5,208.00
  - Elsted and Treyford Parish Council £1,199.40
  - Fulking Parish Council £450
  - Funtington Parish Council £6,351.82
  - Harting Parish Council £10,094.42
  - Hawkley Parish Council £2,760
  - Itchen Valley Parish Council £2,178.22
  - Lavant Parish Council £68,399.87
  - Lewes Town Council £33,345.44
  - Liss Parish Council £9,739.67
  - Lodsworth Parish Council £208.85
  - Petersfield Town Council £2,558.38
  - Pulborough Parish Council £71.34
  - Pyecombe Parish Council £12,940.24
  - Selborne Parish Council £5,682.23
  - Steep Parish Council £5,476.88
  - Swanmore Parish Council £900
  - Tillington Parish Council £1,847.67
  - Trotton with Chithurst Parish Council £4,751.34
  - Twyford Parish Council £664.84
  - West Meon Parish Council £17,197.60
- Total £ 252,928.28**

## Tranquil Lewes spot gets a little love



**An urban wildlife haven is enjoying a new lease of life, thanks to CIL funding to the tune of over £15,000.**

People and wildlife are benefitting from the improvements at Lewes Railway Land, which is situated in the heart of Lewes, just off Cliffe High Street and behind the train station.

Nestled on the flood plain of the River Ouse, the reserve was once a busy railway marshalling yard that has now been reclaimed by nature. The area where the railway sidings once stood is now crammed with wildflowers that buzz with bees and butterflies.

The Railway Land Wildlife Trust was awarded £15,500 for habitat improvements to the site's water meadows and hedgerows. The money has also help to pay for improvements to the old Signal Box – now a brilliant bird hide – and the installation of a dipping platform.

Helen Meade, CEO of Railway Land Wildlife Trust, said: "Our new pond dipping platform in the water meadows has opened up a whole world of beautiful water creatures to the many children and community groups who visit us – the excitement at finding a water stick insect was brilliant! They can dip safely and without damaging the banks of the ditches. When it's really hot we take the creatures to look at in our Signal Box nature hide – also greatly improved with the help of CIL funding."

And Helen added: "We've also had some paths replaced. One path in particular, by the pedestrian bridge over the railway line, would regularly become impassably muddy in the winter months and so we're looking forward to people being able to get into the nature reserve more easily."



Nikki Allen, who helps manage CIL payments for the Authority, said: "It's wonderful to see the improvements take shape at this little oasis in the heart of Lewes. This scheme shows just how much of a difference CIL can make to local communities."

## Boost for apprenticeships



**New funding is helping people learn new skills and develop their career through apprenticeships.**

Section 106 developer contributions, which are administered by the Authority, were awarded to Get East Hants Working Apprenticeship Scheme, creating eight new apprenticeships for people living in the Petersfield area. The scheme supports businesses in East Hampshire district, enabling small business to recruit local people into apprenticeship opportunities. The scheme subsidises wages and facilitates training, easing the burden of recruitment for small businesses.

Since 2013 over 60 apprenticeships have been completed through this scheme across a wide employment sector.

Gill Welsman, who manages Section 106 funds, said: “Establishing and maintaining a healthy economy is essential to underpin the landscapes and communities of the National Park, and supporting small businesses is key in addressing some of the challenges faced by local communities.”

## Overview of last quarter

Appeals submitted to Planning Inspectorate	<b>14</b>
Appeals started	<b>19</b>
Appeals determined	<b>15</b>
Appeals successfully defended	<b>14</b>
Statutory submissions received	<b>1,097</b>
Statutory submissions determined	<b>1,047</b>
Neighbours notified	<b>3,906</b>
Representations received	<b>1,863</b>
Consultations issued	<b>2,812</b>
Conditions imposed	<b>3,129</b>
Enquiries for planning advice	<b>304</b>
Enforcement complaints received	<b>222</b>
Enforcement cases opened	<b>192</b>
Site inspections	<b>219</b>
Enforcement notices served	<b>3</b>
Enforcement cases closed	<b>159</b>

*(Stats for period 1/4/22 to 30/6/22)*

## First Design Guide created



**An exhaustive guide on design excellence in the National Park has been produced for developers, landowners and agents.**

Following two years in the making, the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted by Planning Committee last month.

The document’s creation benefitted from the involvement of Members and community groups and was subject to two rounds of public consultation.

The Design Guide provides guidance on a range of design issues for new development in the National Park. The need to respect the first purpose of the National Park – namely to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area – strongly informs the guidance.

The design quality of new proposals will now be assessed by the Authority against this document as well as Local Plan policies. The design of any new development in the National Park will be expected to demonstrate that it’s responding to existing local character and identity.

Heather Baker, Chair of Planning Committee, said: “Part of what makes the National Park such a special place is the variety of significant landscapes, from the western downs on the edge of Winchester to the iconic coast at the Seven Sisters and everything in between, including historic villages and market towns. This document stresses that new development must respect and build on the National Park’s diverse, distinctive landscapes and townscapes; celebrate the unique sense of place found in them.

“Development proposals considered to be mediocre or poor will not be acceptable. New development should be an opportunity to enhance the beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the South Downs National Park for future generations as well as to achieve great place making.”

Applicants will be expected to use the adopted Sustainable Construction SPD in parallel with the Design Guide.

And Heather added: “It sets out a clear process and what our expectations are. Much of the guidance remains relevant even where small scale development does not need planning permission, as the cumulative impacts of small changes can become significant over time.” Read the document [here](#).

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

## Regeneration leads the way at prestigious awards



The new visitor facilities at One Garden Brighton

**A garden restoration project, regenerated farm buildings and a winery with visitor attractions were announced as the winners of the South Downs Award at the 2022 Sussex Heritage Trust Awards.**



Vanessa Rowlands, Chair of the National Park Authority, presented the South Downs Award at a glittering ceremony at Pangdean Old Barn last month.

The prestigious accolade is sponsored by the Authority and aims to promote outstanding design in a nationally-designated landscape.

One Garden Brighton in Stanmer Park was announced as the overall winner of the South Downs Award. The new facility is a partnership between Brighton and Hove City Council and Plumpton College to restore Stanmer Park. An amazing walled garden and community space has been created, with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, in 20 hectares of the park with the aim to also deliver training, education and outreach opportunities. The South Downs National Park judging team said of the project: “A much-needed, accessible space for everyone, which connects the South Downs National Park with Brighton and Hove.”

Two highly commended projects were also announced: Southview Farm in Pulborough (submitted by Nicholls Countryside Construction), a new family home created from a series of redundant farm buildings, collectively know as ‘Bone Barn’ arranged around a courtyard and 17th century barn.

Wiston Estate Winery, Washington (submitted by ECE Architecture) was also commended for the creation of a new restaurant, shop and tasting room from redundant agricultural barns.

Chairman Simon Knight, Chairman of Sussex Heritage Trust, said: “The Sussex Heritage Trust Awards celebrates a wide variety of excellent restoration,

conservation and new design architectural and landscape projects. It is fantastic to see such a worthy winner and highly commended projects in the South Downs Award, which has done much to set the standard for outstanding design within the National Park.”

The Sussex Heritage Trust Awards are an annual Awards designed to recognise and reward high-quality conservation, restoration and the good design of newly built projects and encourage the use of traditional skills and crafts.

For a full list of all the Award winners and highly commended projects please go to [www.sussexheritagetrust.org.uk](http://www.sussexheritagetrust.org.uk)



New courtyard and visitor facilities at the Wiston Estate winery



Southview Farm in Pulborough

### Dates for diary – Planning Committee

The next Planning Committee meetings will be held on 8 September, 13 October, 10 November and 8 December.

You can watch the meetings on-demand for up to six months after the meeting through our [webcasting portal](#).

You can look at previous and upcoming agendas on the website [here](#).

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

## Meet the team... Ten questions with Carol Brown



### Three words that sum up your job in planning?

We Help Everyone

### Okay, so what's your role at the National Park?

I manage the Development Management Technical Support Team at the Park. My team support the professional officers with planning application casework, but I also oversee the management and ongoing maintenance all of the systems that underpin development management. In reality, we also support the admin teams and professional officers at our five partner authorities (approximately 230 users all in), and all of the public and consultees that view and comment on our planning applications (25,000 registered users on public access). I respond to all manner of data requests, for example, the statutory Government performance reports, as well as internal performance monitoring and Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) data, and also provide data for Freedom of Information (FOI) for planning.

### What appealed to you about working in planning?

Well I actually wanted to be in the RAF as an engineer, but my folks wouldn't sign my forms, so when I did leave school I decided my next best option was to work in a technical drawing office. Coming from Glasgow, it was either a job at the council or in the shipbuilders. Back in the early eighties, shipbuilding was very much a man's job, so I took a Youth Training Scheme post at Strathclyde Regional Council, and was assigned to the Department of Physical Planning (Countryside Section). One of the first tasks I was given was plotting the boundary of Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park! In all, I have 37 years' experience in Local Authority Planning – nine of which were as planning and building control business expert with a software company serving planning authorities like ours across all of the UK.

### Can you describe your typical day?

Well every day is different. I try to plan my week so I have a regular routine, but most days I am answering support calls or dealing with more complex emails and matters flagged to me by the team. Yesterday I answered about 220 emails, three internal support calls, coordinated seven refunds for planning fees, held our regular team meeting, and marked up my diary for July and August. We have a major system upgrade in August, so it's important to plan that well, so I have had to factor in test plans for July, and take notes on how we notify all users of the changes that will occur.

### Best thing about working in planning for a National Park?

I think for me, from the 30,000 emails my team process annually in our main inbox, is seeing how much passion there is out there for the National Park. A lot of people put their absolute heart and soul into their letters of representation, and most trust us to do the right thing.

### What do you love about the South Downs National Park?

I love being outdoors, so for me I think the vastness of the National Park offers so much variety – coastal, inland, hilltops and foreshores, heaths, grasslands, meadows and forests. There really is something for everyone, regardless of the seasons.

### Currently reading/watching?

I'm revisiting Hilary Mantel's Thomas Cromwell Trilogy, so almost finished Wolf Hall (audiobook), and mostly watching Wimbledon when I'm not at a laptop.

### If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Spaghetti bolognese

### Who inspires you?

Difficult one. Inspiration for me comes from many places, and from many people. People like Claire Lomas, for example, absolutely astound me, and make me ashamed of my first-world problems. Sometimes we all ought to give our heads a wobble.

### Describe your perfect day (when not working, of course!)

A very remote all-day trek across the Scottish Highlands. Solitude, a landscape unspoiled, and complete tranquillity. And a very small tent (Leave no trace).

### Picture credits

P3 Richard Reed; P4 right Neil Jones; P6 left Ann-Katrin Purkiss