

Parish Priorities Statement



Introduction

The South Downs National Park Authority decided in May 2022 that it would review parts of its Local Plan in line with Government Policy and to ensure the Plan delivers on corporate priorities relating to Climate Action, ReNature and a National Park for All. The views and input of the local community into the Local Plan Review are vital to us particularly those of our town and parish councils. One way in which town and parish councils can contribute to the Local Plan Review is through a **Parish Priority Statement (PPS)**.

Neighbourhood Priority Statements (NPS) as a concept were introduced in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB), which was published by the Government in May 2022. NPS are statements prepared by local communities that summarise the principal needs and prevailing views for their local area. There is currently very little information available from the Government, but this will be provided at a later date through secondary legislation and regulations.

In the interim we are inviting all our town and parish councils that are located entirely in the National Park or whose main settlement is located in the National Park to prepare a PPS. A full list of these councils is set out in the appendix to this letter. It will not be necessary for the Council to be designated for the purposes of neighbourhood planning in order to do this. The format and content of PPS follows the very broad approach set out in the LURB, to enable any PPS to evolve into NPS as legislation and guidance is provided by Government.

Please use the attached template to prepare your PPS, following the template will assist the SDNPA in collating information and reviewing priorities across the National Park. There are guidance notes for each question about the sort of information we are looking for. The PPS should focus on the principal needs and prevailing views of your local community. Please identify any opportunities to contribute to the Authority's priorities on Climate Action, Nature Recovery and a National Park for All. More information on these priorities can be found in the [SDNPA Corporate Plan](#). We have indicated a word limit for each section to ensure the documents are focused on the main issues any text beyond the word limit may not be considered by the Authority.

It is really important to gather the views of as many people as possible, who live, work or visit your parish. The second question of the template asks you how you have consulted with your local community. A PPS that demonstrates a high level of community engagement and support will ensure the document will influence when informing the Local Plan Review process. As a minimum the draft PPS should be published inviting comments from the wider community. Town and Parish Councils should also make particular efforts to engage with hard to reach and underrepresented groups such as young people. To help you with the template we have written a PPS for the hypothetical parish of Greenville.

Please submit your PPS to us at the address below by 20 October 2023. Officers from the Authority will review your PPS and get back to you with any queries. The intention is for all PPS to be considered by our Policy and Resources Committee with the intention of publishing them on our website.

Your PPS will not be made part of the development plan for the National Park, but it will form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan Review. We will consider the principal needs and prevailing views set out in your PPS as we progress the Local Plan Review and update local planning policy. PPS will also be useful when applying for funding from the Authority, for example, from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Sustainable Communities Fund. Finally, your PPS may be useful for funding applications to other bodies. Where a Town or Parish Council have an adopted Neighbourhood Plan the PPS will supplement the Plan not supersede it as the PPS will not form part of the Development Plan.

I. Your Details

Information Required	Response
Contact name	Parish Clerk
Town or Parish Council	Ditchling
Main contact address	[REDACTED]
Main contact telephone number	[REDACTED]
Main contact email	[REDACTED]
Details of public consultation and engagement used in the preparation of the PPS	<p>Questionnaire available online and in hard copy Publicity by posters, social media Inclusion in school newsletter Inclusion in community magazine distributed to every household</p> <p>Our public consultation for our NDP was lauded by the inspector as gold standard and the priorities of that plan are reflected in this PPS.</p>

Max 100 words

The vision for the future...

What are the three key changes you would like to see in your Parish over the next 15 years? These changes should relate to the priorities set out below. It will also be helpful to explain when you think these changes should happen over the 15 year period.

We want to maintain the unique character of the parish while enabling change that benefits everyone. In particular: (NB all information in this PPS should be viewed in the context of our NDP):

- **Increase new affordable and sustainable housing to provide homes for local people in accordance with the policies of our NDP (ongoing over whole 15-year period).**
- **Facilitate traffic improvements for a safer environment for pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists (ongoing over whole 15-year period).**
- **Overhaul the recreation ground facilities and young persons' play area to improve access and opportunities for a wider range of users (over next two years – phase 1 playground)**

Max 100 words

Development and management of land

Information required	Response
What type and level of development would you like to see in the parish?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-scale development in keeping with the existing eclectic mix of styles in the village. • New housing to be either affordable housing with a mix of social rent and shared ownership, or open-market housing with no more than 3 bedrooms (as NDP). • Homes to include home working space where possible. • Development to foster climate change mitigation, and biodiversity and environmental improvements for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. <p><i>Max 100 words</i></p>
Are there any areas of the Parish you would like to see developed?	<p>All development should be within the settlement boundary.</p> <p>We do not feel there is land available for development other than small-scale infill.</p>
Are there any specific areas you want protected for other uses?	No

Homes

Information required	Response
What type of homes would you like to see in your local community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable homes with a mixture of social rent and shared ownership Homes for downsizing eg for older residents (3 bedrooms or fewer) <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Max 100 words</i></p>
What size of home is needed locally?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3- and 2-bedroom homes (with Policy SD31 1a) amended so that there is a presumption against extensions increasing the number of bedrooms above 3) <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Max 50 words</i></p>
Any other requirements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New homes and those being refurbished should incorporate measures to mitigate climate change, eg solar panels, air/ground source heat pumps, and grey water re-use. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Max 100 words</i></p>

Design

Information Required	Response
Are there any areas of local character which are particularly important to the local community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ditchling conservation area contains a number of listed buildings and its character should be enhanced by any development. The green spaces identified in the NDP all remain relevant and important. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Max 100 words</i></p>
Particular features of buildings of local character	<p>It is anticipated that the village design statement will cover this. Ditchling has a unique architectural heritage and materials used should be sympathetic bearing in mind the current roofscape and use of eg flint.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Max 100 words</i></p>

The natural environment

Information Required	Response
Opportunities to make nature bigger, better and more joined up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The upkeep of council land should where appropriate take nature fully into account. • The former rugby pitch on the Recreation Ground is underused ecologically. • Improvement of The Drove (leased) sub-station land in conjunction with ecological work being carried out on Lodge Hill. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Max 100 words</i></p>

Jobs

Information Required	Response
Information about business you would like to protect and business opportunities that should be provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want the pubs, cafes and shops to have a safe future as they are vital to village life. • We support diversification, eg of agriculture, where appropriate and well managed (ref NDP). • Better public transport is supported to enable sustainable tourism. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Max 100 words</i></p>

Public spaces

Information Required	Response
<i>Public Open Space, Public realm, Pocket Parks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recreation ground play park overhaul is a priority project. • The overall use and facilities of the recreation ground need assessing to ensure maximum use for maximum residents. • The Drove sub-station land is under-used and ripe for improvement, opposite the recently opened car park. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Max 100 words</i></p>

Infrastructure

Information Required	Response
<i>Active travel priorities, roads / parking, community buildings needs, waste / water infrastructure, broadband, renewable energy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parish is woefully served by public transport and we would like to see this improved. • We would like to see cycle routes linking neighbouring service villages and schools, • The link to Keymer and Hassocks is a priority. • Excessive speed, congestion and risks to the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders are major issues in the village and surrounding lanes. The traffic consultancy report accepted by the parish council on 31 July 2023 contains 46 recommendations for improvements. The

Information Required	Response
	<p>council will work with ESCC to consider and prioritise these options and get funding for implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile reception is poor and needs improving, avoiding negative impact on the wider landscape. • Broadband speeds need improving in parts of the parish. • We support a move to renewable energy. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Max 100 words</i></p>

FINALISING YOUR SUBMISSION

As a reminder, before finalising your submission, please check you have addressed the following:

- **You have completed the details in section I, including details of public engagement events and consultation activities which have informed the statement. Where possible please identify the percentage of the community that have engaged in the preparation of the PPS.**
- **Please try to summarise the community's views and aspirations as much as possible, do not provide details of individuals who have commented, and bullet points for key priorities where possible.**
- **If you have supporting evidence or information please use a hyperlink to the data where available, and summarise the information as much as possible in the PPS.**

DISCLAIMER

The assessment process and outputs will feed into the Local Plan review process but we cannot guarantee the delivery of specific community aspirations in the South Downs Local Plan policies, allocations or designations.

DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT

The information collected in this response form will be used by the National Park Authority, as part of its public task, to inform the local plan-making processes and other relevant Authority documents or processes. This information will then be retained until it is superseded. By responding you are accepting the information within your response, may be made available to the public. Any personal information provided (names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses or other contact details) will not be made public. Please let us know if you do not wish for your information to be shared in this way.

All information held by the South Downs National Park Authority may be subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act. If any information included is sensitive and you would like to have the opportunity to object to its release in the event of a Freedom of Information request, please contact us.

Further details on how we manage your information, including your rights under the GDPR, are available in our Privacy Notice <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/transparency/privacy-statement-2/>

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Please tick here to confirm you have read and agree to submit your information in accordance with the disclaimer and data protection statement.
Information required	Response
Print Name	████████████████████
Date	12 th December 2023

We ask that forms are returned by email to planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk

If you are unable to return the form by email please post to:

Planning Policy Team, South Downs National Park Authority, South Downs Centre, North Street
Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9DH